Mr. *BROWN's*

Funeral Sermon

For the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Symmes:*

Together with

A more Large and Particular ACCOUNT of Him, annexed thereto.

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A

Funeral Sermon

Preached

At Bradford, Oct. 31. 1725.

Some time after the

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. Thomas Symmes

Pastor of the Church there:

Containing some Hints of His Character.

Together with

A more Large and Particular ACCOUNT

of Him, annexed thereto.

By JOHN BROWN

Pastor of the Church [illegible]

BRITISH MUSEUM

Divine Help Implored
Under the Loſs of
Godly & Faithful *Men.*

A

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Preached
At *Bradford*, Oct. 31. 1725.
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Paſtor of the Church there:

Containing ſome Hints of His Character.
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A more Large and Particular ACCOUNT
of Him, annexed thereto.

By *JOHN BROWN*, A. M.
Paſtor of the Church at *Haverhil.*

Recommended by Divers Miniſters.

BOSTON: Printed by *T. Fleet*, for *S. Gerriſh*,
near the Brick Meeting-Houſe in Cornhill,
1726.

WE the Subſcribers having conſidered the enſuing Sermon, *together with the* Account annexed *of the Reverend Mr.* Symmes, *do unanimouſly approve thereof, and heartily recommend the ſame to the Publick. As well to Encourage the Author in his Firſt Fruits from the Preſs; as to Signify that We join with Him, in Lamenting unto God our ſore Bereavement; Imploring Divine Help of Him, who hath the Reſidue of the Spirit; to impart unto and increaſe upon Us, the Good Spirit of his Deceaſed Servant: Looking to our Maker to teach Us and All his People particularly, to profit under his Death; and make his Memory Precious, and his Good Example Inſtructive and Quickning to All that knew it, or may hereby be acquainted with it.*

Thomas Blowers,
Moſes Hale,
John Rogers,
Samuel Phillips,
John Tufts,
John Barnard.

A Funeral Sermon

For the Reverend

Mr. *THOMAS SYMMES.*

PSALM XII. 1.

Help, Lord, for the Godly Man ceaſeth: for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men.

IT is an exceeding great Loſs to the World, for Godly and Faithful Men to ceaſe out of the Earth and fail from their Serviceableneſs. It is an heavy Stroke on a *Land*, to loſe ſuch Men, who are the Beauty and Strength of their Nation, while they live: —— it makes the Glory of Jacob to become thin, and the fatneſs

neſs of his Fleſh wax lean —. And it is eſpecially a moſt grievous Loſs to the particular Places, where They dwelt and converſed moſt.

IT would be almoſt an Inſupportable Loſs; but that GOD liveth ſtill, our Rock, and the God of our Salvation. —— It is He that taketh them away from Us, whatever their Office or Qualifications have been; *He taketh away — the Prophet — and the eloquent Orator*; even the LORD, who will have us be ſtill, and know that He is God; who is Righteous in all his Ways and Holy in all his Works; who is Pitiful and of tender mercies who in the midſt of Wrath remembreth Mercy, and chaſteneth us for our Profit; that We might be partakers of his Holineſs: Who is Wiſe and Powerful, to make bitter things ſweet and bring Good out of Evil; and to heal the Breaches in the midſt of Us. In a Word, He is able to *ſanctify* the ſoreſt *Loſſes*; and by them to do us as much Good, as by the *Enjoyment* of our Deareſt Friends and Comforts: —— This is matter of Support unto us.

THAT it may be ſo, there is ſomething incumbent on Us the Survivors.— We muſt not lie down *ſtupid* and *ſenſeleſs*, not conſidering the Work of the Lord, nor regarding the Operation of his Hands: nor yet *overwhelmed* and *deſponding*, as if there were no Hope; much leſs *ſullen* or *impatient* under the hand of God: But We muſt under a deep and *humble* Reſentment of our *Loſs*, be *looking* to our Maker. Iſa. XVII. 7 *Then ſhall a Man look to his Maker and his Eyes be unto the Holy One of Iſrael.*

FOR

FOR this end, We muſt remember what Bleſſings and Helps they were, and endeavour ſuitably to lay to heart their Removal from us. The contrary is very diſpleaſing to God, and looks ſo much the more Ominous to Us. Iſa. LVII. 1. *The Righteous periſheth and no Man layeth it to heart — None conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the Evil to come.* God hath ſaid that the Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed (Prov. X. 7.) the Righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance Pſal. CXII. 6. intimating not only that they oftentimes are ſo, but that They ought to be ſo. This may be ſerviceable in order to our Imitating their good Example; and ſo filling up their places: and to prepare us, to make the more earneſt Supplication to the Father of Spirits, that He that led us by the right hand of *Moſes*, would put his Holy Spirit within us.

NOW, therefore, It having pleaſed our Sovereign Lord, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, ſo *ſuddenly* and *awfully* to bereave us of the Worthy and Excellent *Paſtor* of this *Church*, ſo bright a Star in this Golden Candleſtick, a Burning and a Shining Light; who is fallen down at once from his Meridian Strength and Luſtre; whoſe Light being extinguiſhed, is enough to make the Land mourn, the Churches round about to Languiſh; puts the Town into Confuſion and Aſtoniſhment, his Family into Tears and Sackcloth: It becomes us, not only externally to bewail, but ſincerely *lay to heart*, and religiouſly to Lament this dark Providence. And I look upon my ſelf obliged in particular to drop a Tear over my Deceaſed Father, and bring my Spices to embalm his Memory,

Memory, and implore Divine Help with You under ſo diſtreſſing a Loſs.

AND the firſt meditation, that occurr'd to me on his Death, was this of the Pſalmiſt in my Text; *Help, Lord, for the Godly Man ceaſeth; for the Faithful fail from among the children of Men*: which Words you will doubtleſs be ready to apply, with me, to the preſent occaſion.

I deſign not to take any pains to conſider the primary Scope and Reference of them, to run a parallel between *David*'s caſe under *Saul*'s Perſecution, and Ours—: nor to ſpend any time in paraphraſing the Terms! But only, firſt laying down the obvious Sum and Purport of them, I ſhall endeavour to explain the ſeveral Branches, as they come in courſe; not ſtrictly as they were applied to David's caſe, but more laxly according to the general Import of the Words, and as an independent Paſſage.

THE Sum of the Words then, or DOCTRINE contained in them is This; Scil.

That, When the Godly Man ceaſeth, and the Faithful fail from among the children of Men; it becomes and greatly concerns thoſe that remain, to apply Themſelves more earneſtly unto God for Help.

SO, We ſee David did in this caſe; and doubtleſs this was written for our Learning, that We through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope.

THE

THE Doctrine may be diſcourſed in theſe two parts, 1. Godly and Faithful Men ſometimes ceaſe and fail. 2. Then We muſt look to God for Help.

1. IT is too often a ſad experienced Truth, that *the Godly Man ceaſeth and the Faithful fail from among the children of Men.*

THE Godly muſt not always continue, can't always hold out here.— Moſes, though his natural Force be not abated, muſt Die and end his Service. And Eli's ſpiritual ſtrength ſeemed to decay; his Zeal for God and Fidelity failed, while he was alive. The Righteous periſheth —. Your Fathers, where are They, and the Prophets do they Live for ever? —— David obſerved it in his time, not as a ſtrange thing; but ſpeaks of it, in the Text, as a Proverb; in a great meaſure the common Lot of the poor ſons of men. The Godly Man ceaſeth and the Faithful fail *from among the Children of Men.*

IT may be uſeful, here, and ſuitable to Enquire, 1. Into the Characters of Godly and Faithful Men. 2. In what reſpects They may be ſaid to ceaſe and fail. 3. What Improvement is to be made thereof?

(1) Let us conſider and Enquire into the *Characters* of Godly and Faithful Men.

And I ſhall ſay ——

1. Who is a *Godly* Man.

[THE Hebrew Word (*Chaſid* from the Subſtantive *Cheſed*, uſually rendred in the Greek *Eleos*, and in Latin *Miſericordia*,) " ſignifieth

"Gracious or Merciful, — One that hath obtained Mercy, Goodneſs, Piety, Grace and Benignity from the Lord; and is pious, kind, gracious and merciful unto Others. But the Hebrew word, is more extenſive than the Greek or Latin: When it ſignifieth Piety, it don't intend vulgar or ordinary Piety, but eminent, remarkable and excelling Piety." Saith Mr. *Leigh* ‖.] Hence

1 A Godly Man is One, that hath obtained Mercy, Grace and Favour from the Lord. One that hath found Grace in his Sight, taſted that the Lord is Gracious; — experienced his excellent Lovingkindneſs. Pſal. IV. 3. *The Lord hath ſet a part the Godly for Himſelf.* Such a one the Lord hath diſtinguiſhed from the World and made his Favourite. A Godly Man is One that hath obtained Mercy for the pardoning his Sins. Pſal. XXXII. 6. *for this*, that is for Pardon, after my Example, *ſhall every one that is Godly, pray unto Thee* ——. A Godly perſon is a Juſtified perſon, having an intereſt in the Son of God who juſtifieth the Ungodly. †

2. A Godly Man is One, that is, like God, *diſpoſed* to ſhew Mercy and Kindneſs unto Others. That endeavours to copy his imitable Perfections, to be Holy as He is Holy, Merciful as He is Merciful, and Perfect as He is Perfect. One that is kindly affectioned, ready, and diſpoſed to Do Good towards all both Friends and Enemie as God

‖ Vid. *Leigh*, Crit. Sacra. † Rom. 4. 5.

God is, Eph. V. 1. *Be Ye therefore followers of God as dear Children.* that is, (as You are directed in the next forgoing words Chap. IV. ult.) *Be Ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another; even as God, for Christ's ſake, hath forgiven You.*

3. A Godly Man is one that *lives Godly* in Chriſt Jeſus. One that worſhipeth God in the Spirit, rejoiceth in Chriſt Jeſus and hath no confidence in the fleſh;* Denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, living ſoberly righteouſly and Godly in this preſent world. †

HE is One that hath the fear of God before his Eyes. One that is truly Penitent, having Godly Sorrow for all his Sins, and turning to the Living and true God in Chriſt Jeſus.

HE is One that endeavours to *ſerve* God acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear. One that prays to God alway. Pſal. XXXII. 6. *Every One that is Godly ſhall pray unto Thee* ——: And performeth devoutly all Duties of Divine Worſhip in private and publick. Godlineſs often intends all the Duties of the firſt Table of the Law.

AGAIN, A Godly Man is One that *doeth Good* in his place; after the Example of the bleſſed God. Gal. VI. 10. *As We have opportunity, Let us Do Good unto all men* ——. We ſhould ſtudy the utmoſt Conformity to God, not only in our inward Temper and Diſpoſition, but alſo in our outward Carriage and Actions: be merciful as our

* Phil. 3. 3. † Tit. 2. 12.

Heavenly Father is merciful, and expreſs all the Charity that We can, towards the Souls and Bodies of Others, Doing Good to all, even as God doth; yet Diſtinguiſhing our Friends; for ſo doth God. Pſal. XI. ult. *for the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs, and his countenance doth behold the Upright.* —— We muſt do Good even to our worſt Enemies, after God's Example. Mat. V. 44. 45. —— *Love your Enemies — do good to them that hate you* ——; *that Ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven.* &c.

FINALLY, A Godly Man is one that is *ſincere* in all he does before God and Men; acts from a good Principle and aims at a right End; and makes conſcience of doing all things as near as he can in a right manner. Not contented with a *form* of Godlineſs without the power of it; but doing common Actions after a Godly ſort. Such a one is deſcribed II Cor. I. 12 having the teſtimony of his Conſcience witneſſing for him, that in ſimplicity and *Godly ſincerity*, not with fleſhly wiſdom but by the Grace of God, he hath his converſation in the world.

2. LET us enquire what is implied in the Character of a *Faithful* Man. "This Noun Adje-
"ctive comes from the Subſtantive *Emunah* in the
"Hebrew ſignifying truth, faith, firmneſs. 'Tis
"applied to *Moſes*'s Hands, lift againſt *Amaleck*
"which were *ſteddy*, Exod. XVII. 12. It don't
"always ſignify a perſuaſion of the Truth of
"thoſe things which are ſpoken to us, but that
"Reliance and Dependance which we place in
"any

"any ones Goodneſs or Power, though there be "no words in the caſe *.

THE Character of a Faithful Man may imply in it,

1. THAT a Man be *ſteddy firm* and *conſtant* in his Duty to God. And thus Faithfulneſs ſuppoſeth Godlineſs in an eminent Degree and Meaſure: Without Piety Men won't nor can't be properly called Faithful Men; but a Principle of true Piety diſpoſeth Men to be faithful, and where this prevails, Men *will* be faithful, in all Relations. A *faithful* Perſon is, in Scripture Phraſe, equivalent to a true Believer and Saint †, and Servant of God ‖. He is one that ſtandeth by Faith, nothing wavering; not toſſed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, but eſtabliſhed in the Faith, and waxing ſtrong, giving Glory to God with faithful *Abraham* **.

A Faithful Man is one that hath not his *Principles* to chuſe; much leſs is at a loſs what to chuſe, or whom to ſerve: but reſolved to ſerve the Lord. And then, is conſtant, ſteddy and unmoveable, and abounding in the work of the Lord. One that don't habitually neglect or omit any Duty; that don't draw back from following Chriſt, nor give way to Temptation, but hold out unto the end. Rev. 11. 10. *Be thou faithful unto Death.*— One that continues diligent about his Maſter's Buſineſs till *He* comes, *Mat.* XXIV. 45, 46. *Who then is a faithful and wiſe Servant?*—— *Whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing.*

2. A

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* *Leigh*, Crit. Sac. † Tim. 6 2. Col. 1. 2. ‖ *Pſal.* 101. 6.
** *Neh.* 9. 8.

2. A Faithful Man is one who is *True* to *his Word*. God is ſaid to be faithful when he performs his Promiſes, (Heb. X. 23.) So That Man is faithful, who is as good as his word; as good as he pretends and ſeems to be, Prov. XX. 6. *A faithful Man, who can find?* i. e. "One who is indeed what he ſeemeth and profeſſeth himſelf to be"†. He is one that will keep a Secret betruſted with him, Prov. XI. 13. *He that is of a faithful ſpirit concealeth the matter.* And will make good his promiſe to his Neighbour: Prov. XIV. 5. *A Faithful witneſs will not Ly.*——

3. A Faithful Man is one that is *Diligent*, and *Honeſt*, and ſeeks *to do* all the *Good* he can in his Calling. One that improves his Talents, induſtriouſly makes uſe of all thoſe Advantages which God affords him, to ſerve his Maker, and ſerve his Generation withal; Mat. XXV. 21. *Well done, thou good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been Faithful in a few things*;—— i. e. in improving a few Talents.

HE is one that is *honeſt* and *upright*, and not *deceitful*; fair in his dealings, and performs the buſineſs of his Calling *well*;—— not ſlightly, but *thoroughly*; as the Workmen in K. *Joſiah*'s time, that were employed in repairing the Houſe of the Lord; of whom 'tis ſaid, II Chron. XXXIV. 12. that they *did the work faithfully*; that is, they made *good work* in repairing the Houſe. And ſuch as thoſe Overſeers in good *Jehoiada*'s time; of whom 'tis ſaid, II *King.* XII. 15. that there was *no reckoning* made with them, into whoſe hand they

† *Pool.*

they delivered the Money to be beſtowed on the Workmen: *for they dealt faithfully*. i. e. They were honeſt and true to their truſt.

A Faithful Man is one that looks to perform well *every Duty* of his Calling. Thus *Moſes was faithful in all his houſe*, (Num. XII. 7.) He was not partial in his Duty, but in *every point* did according to his Truſt and Charge, neglecting nothing which God commanded.

THUS, A Faithful *Chriſtian*, is one that improves his Time and his Strength; his Knowledge, Intereſt, Eſtate and the like, to the beſt Advantage; his own and others ſpiritual Good, Luk. XVI. 12. *If ye have not been faithful in that which is another Man's, who ſhall give you that which is your own?* implying that Men *ought* to be faithful in improving their common Gifts, as they would be true Chriſtians, as they would have ſpecial Grace. —— One that performs all Duties, doing juſtice, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God: —— He, I Say, is a faithful Chriſtian.

A Faithful *Friend* is one that will keep Counſel; One that will be free and intimate; will tell his Friend of all his Faults; put him in mind of all his Duty; and moſt affectionately do him all the Good he can. ——

A Faithful *Miniſter* is one that *takes heed* to his Miniſtry, declares the *whole Counſel* of God, unto *every one* committed to his Charge; adminiſtring *all* Ordinances in their *ſeaſon*, to their *proper* Subjects; and *continuing* therein, and *giving* himſelf *wholly* to them. ——

Having

HAVING thus, briefly hinted who are *Godly* and *Faithful* Men, I come now to Enquire in the ſecond place, ——

(2.) IN what reſpects and When may Theſe Godly and Faithful Men be ſaid to *ceaſe* and *fail?*

Anſ. 1. WHEN their *Strength* of *Body* and *Powers* of *Mind fail*; or for want of *Opportunity* they are not *able* to do Service in their places. —— When their Underſtanding Judgment and Memory fail them; their Senſes decay; or when through Perſecution or any other means their Hands cannot perform their enterprize.

2. WHEN their *Grace* is at a *Stand* and *Languiſheth*: when they grow *deceitful*, *idle*, *ſlothful*, *remiſs*.—— Thus it is with *ſome*, who like the Church of *Sardis*, have need to ſtrengthen the things that remain and are *ready to die*. Even the Wiſe Virgins themſelves, ſometimes *ſlumber* and *ſleep*. There are, too often, times of Declenſion: ——this is what our Text principally intends.

3. WHEN they are cut down by *Death*, and periſh out of the Earth: then they may be ſaid to *fail*. Indeed,

(1.) THEN, They don't *utterly ceaſe*, ſo as no more to have a Being. Their *Bodies* indeed periſh, but not without hopes of a better Exiſtence in the Reſurrection-State: Their *Souls* ceaſe not at all, but go to be with God and Chriſt, which is far better than to abide in the fleſh *.

But,

* *Eccleſ.* 12. 7. *Phil.* 1. 23.

But,

(2.) THEY *ceaſe from among the children of men.* The places that now know them, ſhall know them no more. They ſhall behold Man no more with the Inhabitants of the world †.

1. THEIR *Perſons ceaſe.* Their Souls and Bodies are ſevered. The *Man* that uſed to be in this or that Houſe, in this or that Relation; in this or that Employment, is here no more.

2. THEIR *Service* and *Labours ceaſe.* Rev. XIV. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead, which die in the Lord,——they reſt from their Labours.* Eccl. IX. 10. ——*There is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wiſdom in the Grave whither thou goeſt.* Joh. IX. 4. ——*The Night cometh, when no Man can work.*

THEY can no more *Deviſe,* invent, contrive or conſult any thing to our Help; *in that very day their thoughts periſh.* Pſal. CXLVI. 4.

THEIR *Words* are all at an end. They can *Pray* no more with and for us; *Inſtruct, Warn* and *Counſel* us no more; in a proper ſenſe.——

THEIR *Works* ceaſe. They can no more *Worſhip* God in his Ordinances; nor *Serve* their Generation in their Callings: No more *Set* any *Example* before us; no more *Do* any *Alms,* or Deeds of Charity for our Souls or Bodies——!

But I paſs now to ſay,——

(3.) WHAT IMPROVEMENT we are to make of this. And here,

1. WE ſhould *take notice* of it: Behold how the Godly are taken out of the World; **See their*

† *Iſa.* 38. 11. **Pſal.* 37. 37.

End. Let not the righteous periſh, and no man regard it, but *conſider* the end of their converſation.

2. BE *humbled* under it, as a *token* of God's *Anger* come and coming out againſt us; and therefore *mourn* under the Loſs; and be *afraid* of God's Anger; and *turn* to Him that ſmiteth us.

3. REMEMBER what they *were*, and *have done*; and be Thankful—, and Imitate them.

4. LEARN our own Frailty and Danger—, and *prepare* to follow them.

AND now let us endeavour thus to Improve our late Awful and Sorrowful Bereavement. It hath pleaſed God to cauſe our Father, Friend and Paſtor to *ceaſe* and *fail* from us, not by old Age, or Slothfulneſs, or decay of his Gifts or Graces, or Uſefulneſs while he lived; but *Death* has brought him *ſuddenly* to an end of his Labours—. What remains for us, is to *profit* under his Death, and prepare to follow him. For this end, let us——

FIRST, Remember what He *was*, and what He *did*; how he *Lived*, and how he *Died*. Here I ſhall not pretend to give a formal and full Character of him; partly becauſe it has been done already, better than I am capable of doing it; and partly becauſe my Diſcourſe, nor the Time won't allow me; but only as my Subject leads me, to give as well as I can, (in order to teſtify my grateful remembrance of him, and deſires to inſtruct my ſelf and you—;) a Summary Account of him, in ſome Hints of his Piety and Fidelity.

HE was indeed a Godly Man, and Faithful Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt. I won't ſay, He was

a Man of an Unenvied and Unaſperſed Character; He was too good and faithful a Man, to paſs thro' the World without being evil ſpoken of; his Eminency provoked Satan and ſome of his Inſtruments, the more to envy and aſperſe Him; and a Man of his quick Temper, and cheerful Conſtitution, is ſometimes the more expoſed to Cenſure. However, *We* have reaſon to eſteem him very highly in love for his work's ſake.

HE was obſerved by ſome of his Friends and Acquaintance that knew him beſt in his Minority, to be a very hopeful and *pious Youth*. Sometime while he went to *School*, I am informed, He performed the part of a *Chaplain* in his Siſter's Family, and diſcovered an uncommon Gift in Prayer; and while he was at *College*, beſide his very good proficiency and promiſing Excellency in humane Literature; He was obſerved for his *real Piety*. His Preſident, the late Venerable Dr. *Increaſe Mather* †, hath given this Teſtimony of him, "I have my ſelf known him from his "Youth. When he reſided at the College, I ob"ſerved Real Piety in him, and was then per"ſuaded that the Lord would make him a Bleſ"ſing.

AND as for the *latter* and beſt part of his Life, You are Witneſſes of his Piety and Faithfulneſs. His *publick Prayers* (as far as we can judge) ſhewed him to be a very Godly Man. He had not only an excellent *Gift* in Prayer, in chuſing out Words, and readily ſuiting himſelf to particular Occaſions and Emergencies, but he ſhewed great

† In his Preface to Mr. *Symmes*'s Monitor to Delaying Sinners.

Compaſſion, in remembring and repreſenting the Caſes of Others, and *pleading* with God for them: —ſhewed much of the Grace and Spirit of Prayer: —manifeſted great *Humility* and *Reverence* in the Duty: he uſed no canting Tone, nor loudneſs of Voice, in Prayer, by which ſome are ready to meaſure Men's Devotion and Affection; but he choſe rather to ſhew his Reverence and Submiſsneſs, in a calm and deliberate Utterance: Conſidering that God was in Heaven and he on Earth, therefore his Words were few, his Sentences ſhort, and he was not haſty to utter any thing before God. Yet he ſhewed great *Fervency* in *pleading* with God, and filled his Mouth with Arguments. He prayed alſo with great *Importunity*, in *giving himſelf unto* Prayer; witneſs the many Faſts he kept with You; *wreſtling* with God, and not letting him go, without a Bleſſing.

IN his *Preaching*, where he ſtood in God's ſtead, he endeavoured to ſpeak and exhort with *all Authority*, and to *magnify his Office*. Here, his Elocution was quite different from That in Prayer; He lifted up his Voice *like a Trumpet*, (as *loud* ſometimes, as *pleaſantly* and *artfully*) and opened his mouth *boldly* as he ought to ſpeak; and full of Love, Compaſſion, Joy, Sorrow, Moderation, Zeal, as the matter required; He could exceedingly to the Life expreſs, and almoſt raiſe in Others, any Paſſion whatever. And though I don't apply to him, what was ſaid of his great Lord and Maſter, *Never Man ſpake like him*; yet I believe he might ſay after Chriſt in another caſe, *The Zeal of thine Houſe hath eaten me up*.

His

HIS Piety ſhewed it ſelf alſo, in his great Devotion, and extraordinary Delight in *Singing God's Praiſes*; and taking pains to reform this part of Worſhip. —— Though Some may ignorantly look upon what he did in this matter, as a Blemiſh in his Character, I am far from thinking ſo; but believe (as All in charity are bound to believe, from what He has publickly declared) that He *therein* aimed to do God Service; and therein his End is in a great meaſure anſwered.

IN his *Family* he exerciſed himſelf unto Godlineſs, by reading the Scriptures, by Prayer, and by Singing Pſalms, at leaſt in the latter part of his Life; and Sometimes by *expounding* the Scriptures in imitation of Mr. *Philip Henry*. —— And by Catechiſing his Children.

BUT his *Fidelity*, accompanying his Piety, I think, very much diſtinguiſhed Him; his improving well his Time, and all his Talents, which were very great.

AS far as I can Learn, He endeavoured to be truly *faithful* in all Relations. He was a Faithful Friend; and faithful even to his Enemies, by praying for them in an uncommon manner in their calamities *. And was as *ready* and *hearty* in Forgiving, as ever he was *Quick* in Reſenting any real or ſuppoſed Injury.

BE

* In the Diviſions at *H*——*l*, as I am informed, when ſome were ſo unhappily prejudiced againſt Him, that He could do no good for them by his Advice, which they very much needed: He deſired his Friends with him to ſet apart ſome time every Morning to *pray* for them, till their Troubles were ended.

BE ſure he was very true and Faithful to his Brethren in the Miniſtry: very Candid, Familiar, ready to *adviſe*, *encourage* and *enliven* them in their Work; always forward to lead in and promote any good Deſigns.

AND I believe You can bear me witneſs, and indeed inform *me* better than I *You*, of his Faithfulneſs in his *Miniſtry*. He diligently attended *all Parts* of his Miniſtry; by giving himſelf to *Reading* in his Study, and *publick Reading* the holy Scriptures, which after the practice of his Father, your former excellent and venerable Paſtor; and alſo according to the *N. E.* Confeſſion of Faith †, he eſteemed a part of Divine Worſhip; *Preaching* the Word in Seaſon and out of Seaſon; *Prayer*, *Catechiſing*, *Adminiſtration* of the *Sacraments*, and *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*.

AND He took abundance of *pains*, You know, in all theſe parts of his Office, I believe it may be ſaid of Him, that He did not any of his work deceitfully. I have ſome times wondred at his *unwearied* Diligence and Induſtry; *ſtudying early* and *late*, *preaching* with *all* his *might*; with all Longſuffering and Doctrine. Let Sinners here witneſs if he did not *faithfully warn* and *intreat* them——; and Saints, if he did not counſel, encourage and quicken them abundantly from this Desk; I believe he ſhun'd not to declare the whole Counſel of God. Let Scandalous Perſons witneſs, if he has not *faithfully* reproved them, in private, for their diſorderly walking. Let ſuch as have been Sick and Diſconſolate witneſs, if he has

† Chap. 22. Sect. 5.

has not been very cordial and *faithful*, in directing and comforting them in Trouble.—— He took no little *pains* in Catechiſing; and *Laboured abundantly* to Rule well, revive and carry on Church-Diſcipline; and bewail'd that he could do no more this way, becauſe of Peoples backwardneſs to bear Teſtimony againſt Offenders.

AND He took all *Opportunities* of doing Good. Witneſs the Young Mens Meetings, and other private Meetings; publick Lectures, and Church-Meetings before the Sacrament; his Paſtoral Viſits, and deſiring his young People to viſit Him at his own Houſe, where he has induſtriouſly examined them by turns from Morning to Night; and his Occaſional Converſe, which as it was commonly briſk and cheerful, ſo alſo was entertaining and profitable, and very communicative, and ſeldom without ſome religious turns and hints. And I know he was heartily diſpoſed to Liberality and works of Charity. Indeed he was generally behind-hand in the World, which forced him to do the leſs this way; but was very free of what he had, and *given to Hoſpitality*.

HE ſtudied to *approve himſelf to God*. And ſuch was his *Fidelity*, (ſo I call it, and ſo he thought it to be,) that he choſe to diſpleaſe Men, rather than not diſcharge a good Conſcience. He was ſome times ſo Plain, Reſolute and Severe in proſecuting what he was perſwaded was the Cauſe of God, that he often incurr'd the diſpleaſure of ſome Men; and expoſed himſelf to Reviling and Cenſure; but he told me, He "believed he "could, if he were ſo minded, eaſily have kept "in with his People, as well as the moſt peace-

"able

" able Miniſter in the Country, if he would only " preach general Truths, and not touch them in " a tender part; but, for his part, he could not " think himſelf faithful in ſo doing.

BUT, however he might appear to ſome, who are ſo ingrateful and cenſorious, as to mark only a Man's failings, and Imprudences, and always harp upon them; Yet the Account which he kept of his *ſecret Walk* with God, ſhews him to have been a very ſincere Chriſtian, as well as faithful Miniſter. That he was much *given* to *Prayer*; ſo much as one omiſſion of *ſecret Prayer* had a ſorrowful remembrance †. At ſtated Seaſons he kept days of Prayer in ſecret, and was always very particular and ſolemn in *Preparation* for the Sacrament, examining his Evidences, Deſires, Wants, and making his Vows. He made *Examination* his daily task; obſerved his Miſcarriages, lamented his Paſſionateneſs, was always thankful for the Reſtraints of Divine Grace; obſerved his *Experiences* in communion with God, *Aſſiſtances* in Duty, and gave praiſe for them; and at other times would lament and humble himſelf, when he was *ſtraitned* and denied ſuch Aſſiſtance. Theſe *Hints* may put us in mind, and prove to us, that He was a Godly and Faithful Man.

FURTHERMORE, Remember what He has *Done*. Has he not done good? has not God witneſſed to his Sincerity, in owning his Labours? han't we reaſon to think, that he obtained Good for us by his Prayers? and that God hath made his

† See the *Account* annexed to this Diſcourſe.

his Miniſtry very ſerviceable? Be ſure, The Church hath been greatly enlarged under it: He admitted to the Lord's Table in 17 Years time, upwards of 230 Perſons in this ſmall Town. Beſure he has laid in a *good ſtock* of *Prayers* for You; He has taught you a *great deal* of ſound *Doctrine*; left you a great deal of good *Counſel*, and faithful Warning; and has left us a very good *Example*. Beſides what hath been mentioned, there is one thing more remarkable, to wit, his *Humility* towards God, in recording in his Diary and Church-Book, *praiſe* to God alone, for all his Experiences, Aſſiſtances and Succeſs, ſaying, *To God be all the Glory: Not I, but the Grace of God.* And I have obſerved his Humility in *preferring Others* to Himſelf; and his Juniors have been often aſhamed, by his asking their Advice in caſes of Difficulty he was concerned in.

Finally, WE have good reaſon to conclude, (which is the greateſt matter of Comfort under ſo ſorrowful a Bereavement,) that as a Godly Man, who was found Faithful, he *obtained Mercy* of the Lord in a dying Hour. As he had often very happy Experiences in his Life, ſo he had moſt comfortable Hopes in Sickneſs; was not afraid to Dy. He told me he had "often thought, "that he could as freely Dy, as ever he did any "thing in his Life, to get rid of Sin." He was very humble under a ſenſe of his Sinfulneſs and Unprofitableneſs; deſired that he might live to do better, as he reſolved and hoped he ſhould in every Relation. However, was very much *reſigned* to God's Will, which was the laſt thing he intimated to any of us. He was once under

Clouds in his Sickneſs, but they ſoon ſcattered, and he enjoyed great Serenity of Soul. He could not ſay much; the moſt that I heard him ſay was in reckoning up with a moſt *rational* and *ſteddy* Faith, his Evidences for Heaven; which, for fear I ſhould be too tedious, I muſt forbear mentioning here ||.

THUS Lived and thus Died, this Godly and Faithful Man. And We could have been glad (at leaſt ſome of Us,) to have enjoyed Him longer; but ſeeing that muſt not be, We muſt get what Good We can by his Death: Many of Us could have wiſhed to have heard more from him in his Sickneſs, but we deſerved it not, for hearkening no more to him in the time of his Health. He was then able and forward enough to ſpeak to us:—— We muſt now remember his *former* Counſels and Exhortations, and if we did not follow them Then, do it Now. And particularly recollect the Inſtructions You have received from Him, proper to your preſent Condition; and endeavour to govern Your ſelves, as you can imagine Your Paſtor would adviſe you, could he ſpeak to you from the Dead.

Secondly, LET us be thankful to Heaven, that there ever was ſuch a Man ſent to us; Bleſs God for his Abilities, and Chriſtian Attainments; and that he obtained Mercy to be *faithful*, and was Inſtrumental of doing ſo much Good as he did; in increaſing ſo wonderfully as he did the Church

|| See the following Account latter End.

Church here at *Bradford*. He needs not any of our Praiſes, 'tis not for that End that I have ſaid any thing of him; but God deſerves Praiſe for him: Let Us do as He did, in aſcribing unto God *all the Glory*.

Thirdly. FROM this let us learn our own Frailty and danger of ſudden Death. He was accounted a ſtrong hail Man, and yet how did Sickneſs, and no violent Sickneſs neither, conſume his Life! Within ten Days before his Death, he was in the Pulpit preaching to You. *Lord! make Us to know our End, and the meaſure of our Days, what it is, and how frail we are*: If this be done in the Green Tree, what ſhall become of the Dry? If Death ſo eaſily conquer ſtrong Men, what may poor crazy Bodies expect? If Death makes ſuch work with godly and faithful Men, what will become of poor worthleſs Sinners, that are nothing but Cumberers of the Ground?

LET us conſider our danger of dying ſuddenly, and dying in our Sins, or having our Work to do when Sickneſs comes. We have Warning of it from Him who is now dead. He earneſtly adviſed, "that all would forthwith prepare for "Death, becauſe 'tis a Work that muſt be done "or they undone." He was more ſenſible than ever of the Difficulty of doing it on a Sick Bed. Indeed he had it not to do then; He had Peace, he ſaid, "worth ten thouſand Worlds." Affliction did not much diſtreſs, but greatly better'd his Soul. O let Us endeavour to *Imitate* Him, follow his Faith, conſidering the End of his Converſation.

OTHERWISE, We are in danger of further and worſe Judgments. It looks as if we were ripening for thoſe Judgments which the Death of the Godly is ſometimes a Preſage of, that That Scripture is fulfilling in our Ears, *That the Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come* †. That it is thus ſometimes, is certain; and when is it more likely to be ſo, than when Godly Men are taken away in the midſt of their Serviceableneſs; when they were as capable as ever of doing Good, before they come to be enfeebled by old Age? And nothing can prevent the ſad Omen, but our Repentance and turning unto Him that ſmiteth us; and obeying the Voice of the Word and Rod; earneſtly ſeeking unto God to Save and Help us. And this brings me to the Second Part of my Diſcourſe, *viz.*

II. WHEN it is ſo, *that the Godly Man ceaſeth* &c. it becomes and greatly concerns Us, to *apply our ſelves the more earneſtly unto God for Help. Help, Lord.* The Word *Help*, according to the Original, is largely uſed in Scripture; "ſignifying "all manner of ſaving, helping, delivering and "preſerving. To Save from Adverſity, *Pſal.* "XXXIV. 7. To Save from Sin, *Mat.* I. 21. and "to ſave from Wrath, *Rom.* V. 9 *.

1. INDEED We ſhould always ſeek to God for Help, in caſe Godly and Faithful Men did not fail; Jer. XVII. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Curſed be the Man that truſteth in Man, and maketh Fleſh his Arm,*

† *Iſa.* 57. 1. * See *Leigh*'s Critica Sacra.

Arm, and whoſe Heart departeth from the Lord. The moſt Godly and Faithful Men can help us but little; nay, ſcarce any thing at all of themſelves alone. They can't ſave us from Sin, from Sickneſs, nor from Wrath: If we don't ſeek unto God, 'tis in vain to depend on Men to Help; they ſhall only deliver their own Souls by their Righteouſneſs. But however,

2. GODLY and Faithful Men, while they live in Health and Strength, and have the Preſence of God with them, are great Helps and Bleſſings among the Children of Men. *Moſes* of old was a great Help to ſave *Iſrael* from being deſtroyed many a time; ſo was *Joſhua* and the Judges, *Jepthah* and *Gideon* and *Sampſon*, &c. and afterwards, under the Captivity, *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, &c. of whom we read, in the Prophecy of *Obadiah*, v. 21. *And Saviours ſhall come upon Mount Zion to judge the Mount of Eſau, and the Kingdom ſhall be the Lord's*——. Good Men are many times Inſtrumental *Saviours*.

(1.) THEY *help* to *ſave* Men from *Sin*. They are ſome *Reſtraint* by their Authority; a *Guide* to Men in the right Way, by their Inſtruction, Counſel, Example, *&c.* Thus *Jehoiada*, while he lived, was a great Help to King *Joaſh*, and a means to preſerve the Kingdom in good Order *.

(2.) THEY help to *keep off Judgments*. As in likelihood *Lot* did from *Sodom*; and we know *Moſes* did from *Iſrael*; He ſtood in the Gap and made Interceſſion for *Iſrael* many a time, and God

* 2 *King.* 12. 2.

God turned away his Wrath. For the ſake of good *Joſiah* God deferred bringing Evil on *Judah*, which He intended †.

(3.) THEY *help* to *fetch down Bleſſings* Temporal and Spiritual. *Jam.* V. 16.—— *The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man availeth much. Elijah* obtained Rain by his Prayer, *Eliſha* the *Shunamite's* Son. The *Elders* of the Church are to pray with the Sick, and *the Prayer of Faith ſhall Save the Sick.* Jam. V. 14, 15.

THEY are Means of deriving to us *Spiritual Bleſſings*; ſuch as Pardon, Reſtraining, Converting, Quickning and Comforting Grace. *Moſes* obtained Pardon for *Iſrael*; *Job Peace with God* for his Friends. Chriſtians are directed to pray one for another, with this Encouragement of *Converting a Sinner from the error of his ways.* Jam. V. 16, 19, 20.

3. WHEN ſuch Men fail, we have the *greater need* to go to God for Help; ſo *David* did in our Text. But,

Q. HOW muſt we go to God for Help?

A. 1. BY *Repentance* and *Faith*: elſe we ſhall have no Help from God; but he will puniſh us ſeven times more for our Sins. Whereas if we return to Him, He will return to us, if we believe in Him through Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved; if not by Men as Inſtruments, yet, which is better, God can make up the loſs of humane Helps by his Preſence.

2. BY

* 2 *King.* 22, 19, 20.

2. BY *Prayer.* This Courſe the Text directs us to. And the Light of Nature teacheth in all Affliction and Diſtreſs to pray unto God for Help. —— Thus the Pſalmiſt reſolves in a like caſe; Pſal. LVII. 2. *I will cry unto God moſt High, unto God, that performeth all things for me.* In *this caſe* therefore We ſhould *pray,*

(1.) THAT God would *help us to bear,* and *Sanctify* to Us, our Loſs, in the Death of Godly and Faithful Men: 'Tis his Prerogative and Promiſe to *teach us to profit,* Iſa. XLVIII. 17. which ſhould oblige and encourage us to go to Him.

(2.) THAT He would *repair the Breaches* ——. —Raiſe up and quicken Others, or help Us to fill the Places of the Godly Deceaſed; That inſtead of the Fathers may be the Children; that "inſtead of our Elijah's" which were the Chariots of Iſrael and the Horſemen thereof, there may be (when They are gone to Heaven) "Eliſha's raiſed up "in their ſtead."

(3.) THAT God would Help by his *Special Preſence* and the more immediate Influences of his Spirit. —— Though our beſt Men are taken off, We muſt not be Diſcouraged, but Enquire early after God. —— *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* —— *Where is He that brought them up out of the Sea with the Shepherd of his Flock? Where is He that put his holy Spirit* within Him? Iſa. LXIII. 11.

APPLICATION.

I. *LET us repent of all our Sins,* which have had a hand in taking away the Godly from Us; and *fly to the Blood of Chriſt for Pardon.* Let us Repent of

of our Unthankfulneſs for Chriſt's faithful Miniſters; of our Slighting, Deſpiſing, Diſobeying, Reproching Them. Let us Repent of all our Unprofitableneſs under the Miniſtry ——: 'tis high time to bewail it when We ſee the Means and moſt excellent Helps taken away. The Godly Deceaſed Miniſters, that uſed earneſtly to preach the Doctrine of Repentance, ſhall preach it no more; but Providence loudly calls upon Us by their Death to Repent and make our Peace with God, by Faith in Chriſt; before *We* Dy alſo, that Iniquity may not be our Ruine.

II. LET us earneſtly *Pray for Divine Help*, under the preſent ſorrowful Diſpenſation and Bereavement.

1. THAT God would help the *Family* of his Dear Servant Deceaſed, under *Their* ſore Bereavement. That God would remember his Covenant for Them; — and not ſuffer His Faithfulneſs to fail; that He would be the Father of the Fatherleſs and the God of the Widow; That the Generation of the Upright may be bleſſed; That as, We have ſeen, the Righteous hath not been forſaken; ſo We may not ſee his Seed begging Bread.

2. SUFFER me to Exhort You my Brethren of this *Church* and *Congregation*, to be *much in prayer* to God, to Help *You* under *Your* awful Bereavment. Surely 'tis a Time for Prayer with You, wherein God expects that You ſhould humble Your ſelves, Seek his face and turn from every evil way. Be perſuaded then to Humble your ſelves under the mighty Hand of God: and Repent, leſt He come quickly and remove the Candleſtick alſo out of

his

his place. And Pray that He would not leave his Sanctuary deſolate; That though now He hath ſmitten the Shepherd, the Sheep may ſtill be preſerved from ſcattering abroad. Pray the Lord of the Harveſt (and you will do well to call in ſome Others, Godly and Faithful Men, to pray with and for you, unto God) that he wou'd Help you to another faithful Labourer. And be careful to ſeek unto the Lord, in a *Right Way*, for ſuch another Gift; which muſt be with *great Humiliation Solemn Faſting* and *hearty Repentance*; elſe Your Sins, which juſtify God in taking away your late Excellent Paſtor, will provoke Him, not to give you another Paſtor after his own Heart.—— And with *great Union* and *fervent Supplication*: You had need be well agreed together to obtain ſuch a Bleſſing of your Heavenly Father. *Behold How Good and how pleaſant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* —— *There the Lord commandeth the Bleſſing.* Pſal. CXXXIII. 1, 3.

3. LET us pray God to Help *Surviving Miniſters*, particularly Thoſe in this *Neighbourhood* ——, That He would preſerve Their Lives and Health: and make no more Breaches on the Flocks. That God would Help them to *realize* their own Frailty, as well as *preach* other Men's; and *remember* They are but *Earthen Veſſels*, eaſily broken. That God will Help them to follow the good *Example* of his Deceaſed Servant; to redeem their Time; take heed to Themſelves and to Their Miniſtry; that They may ſave Themſelves and Thoſe that hear them. And particularly that God would help *me*, who am one of the greateſt ſharers in his Loſs, and give me a double Portion of his Spirit.

4. THAT God would Help the *Neighbouring Churches*, and the *whole Land*; to Improve this Providence aright; — That they may be *doubly* quickned to Improve thankfully the Means of Grace while They have them, and prepare for Death; namely from the conſideration of their *Miniſter's Frailty*, and of *Their own Frailty*. ———

AND now by way of Motive, conſider

1. THAT God *can* ſuccour, help and ſave Us, though our beſt Friends on Earth fail us. He can raiſe up Others — or do without them. The Reſidue of the Spirit is with Him. He that furniſhed *Mr. Symmes* and made him ſo rich a Bleſſing——, can help thoſe that remain — ; and provide another for poor *Bradford*. ——— And He can make this Grievous Stroke turn to our Salvation, That We may now remember and fear, and practice according to the Miniſtry of the Deceaſed, more than We did while We enjoyed it: And that We may get more Good by the Death of this Godly Miniſter, than ever We did by his Life.

2. IF We do thus Seek unto God, *He will help us*: will hear us in the day of Trouble, and the Name of the God of *Jacob* ſhall defend us; He will ſend us Help from the Sanctuary, and ſtrengthen us out of Zion: will remember all our Offerings, and fulfil all our Petitions †. For *there is a River, the Streams whereof ſhall make glad the City of God: the holy Place of the Tabernacle of the moſt high. God is in the midſt of her: ſhe ſhall not be*

† Pſal. 20.

be moved; God ſhall help her, and that right early. Pſal. XLVI. 4, 5. For he never ſaid to the Seed of Jacob, *Seek ye me in vain* a: But he hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee: ſo that* we *may boldly ſay, the Lord is* our *Helper* b; He hath ſaid, *Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up* c; He hath ſaid, *I will give you Paſtors according to mine Heart* d, and has bid us *pray* to *the Lord of the Harveſt* e, for this End. 'Tis ſaid, *A Father of the Fatherleſs, and a Judge of the Widows, is God in his holy Habitation* f;—— *The Generation of the Upright is bleſſed* g; *When Father and Mother forſake* them, *then the Lord will take* them *up* h. Shall not we then be encouraged to pray unto God? O let us ſtir up our ſelves to take hold on Him; and find in our hearts to pray this Prayer, particularly with *David*, in another caſe, II Sam. VII. 25. and ſo on; with which I conclude; *And now, O Lord God, the Word that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy Servant, and concerning his Houſe, eſtabliſh it for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid; and let thy Name be magnified for ever, ſaying, The* LORD OF HOSTS IS GOD OVER ISRAEL:— *Thou haſt promiſed this Goodneſs unto thy Servant: Therefore now let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the Houſe of thy Servant, that it may continue for ever before thee: for thou, O Lord, haſt ſpoken it; and with thy Bleſſing let the Houſe of thy Servant be bleſſed for ever.* AMEN.

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a Iſa. 45. 19. *b* Heb. 13. 5, 6. *c* Jam. 4. 10. *d* Jer. 3. 15. *e* Mat. 9. 38. *f* Pſal. 68. 5. *g* Pſal. 112. 2. *h* Pſal. 27. 10.

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BRITISH
9 MY 72
MUSEUM

A Particular Plain and Brief

Memorative Account

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Symmes.*

BEING

An Illuſtration of what is ſaid of Him in the foregoing SERMON; and alſo containing ſome other Parts of his

CHARACTER.

Chiefly taken

From his own Sayings and Writings, particularly his *Diary* and *Church-Records.*

To which is added,

His ADVICE to his *Children*, to his *Servants*, and to his *People*;—— particularly as to his Succeſſor in the Work of the Miniſtry.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A Plain Memorative ACCOUNT

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Symmes.*

CHAP. I.

His Birth and Deſcent.

MR. *Thomas Symmes* was born at *Bradford* Feb. 1. 1677--8. The Son of the Reverend Mr. *Zechariah Symmes*, who was the firſt Miniſter of the Goſpel that ſettled at *Bradford*. His Grand-Father (whoſe Name alſo was *Zechariah*) "was above 40 Years the Paſtor of the Church in *Charleſtown*;" whoſe Life is mentioned in Dr. *C. Mather*'s Hiſtory of *New-England*.' His Great-Grand-father, Mr. *William Symmes* was ordained a Miniſter in the Famous Year 1588"*. He was endowed and adorned with a Healthy Conſtitution; a Comely and Lively Countenance and Complexion; a very cheerful, free, affable, generous

*Dr. *I. Mather*'s Preface to one of Mr. *Symmes*'s Sermons.

nerous and courteous Spirit and Diſpoſition; a very handſome genteel Air and Deportment; which rendred his Company and Converſation pleaſant and entertaining. But withal he had a quick and haſty Temper, which ſome too far improved to ſlur his other Excellencies; though to him 'twas matter of continual Conflict, as may been ſeen afterwards, and indeed ſerv'd to exerciſe and illuſtrate his good Nature and Grace.

CHAP. II.

His Education.

HE had the chief of his School-Learning, as I'm informed, (after ſome Inſtruction in the Latin Tongue, by his Father,) at *Charleſtown*, under the Famous *Maſter Emerſon*, who was afterwards School-maſter at *Salem*; where I think He ended his Days: And by his indefatigable Induſtry and Sprightlineſs was fitted for the College in leſs than two Years time: And was admitted there, 1694: in the 17th. Year of his Age; under the Tuition of Mr. *Leverett*, who was ſince Preſident of *Harvard College*, now Deceaſed.

I think by the help of Benefactors (Mr. *Brattle* in particular) who among other things favoured Him with the Buttlerſhip a great while; He had the Advantage and Opportunity of Continuing at College, till two Years after He had taken his Second Degree.

And as far as I can learn He was an Ornament to the College; Diſcovering a Studious Mind, and very conſiderable Brightneſs and Penetration

on

on of Soul, and a Religious Diſpoſition withal; evident not only to his Preſident, as was noted in the Sermon preceeding—; But his own Familiar Acquaintance have acknowledged it in Him—. He made a Polite Orator; had a Quick Talent at Diſputation; And need not have been aſhamed to Vie with the Greateſt Diſputants of the College.

CHAP. III.

His Settlement in the Miniſtry.

AT 25 Years of Age He began to Preach; but often complain'd that He began too ſoon. Quickly after which, (I Suppoſe) He was Invited to *Boxford*; And in the Year 1702. December 30. was Ordain'd to the Paſtoral Office there, the firſt Miniſter of the Goſpel in that Town. And during his Miniſtry there, 72 Perſons were admitted to the Lord's Table, beſides the Church that was firſt gathered, and many Others afterwards diſmiſs'd from other Churches. A conſiderable Number likewiſe were brought to own the Covenant, and ſo intitled to Baptiſm for their Children, according to the Reſult of the *Synod* in 1662. But meeting at length with ſuch uncommon Difficulties as He was not able to encounter, and ſeeing no comfortable Proſpect of Eſcaping them, ſo long as He continued there; Sometime in the Year 1706 (as I find by his Papers) He was "thoughtful of removing from *Boxford*." However He was not peremtory, but willing to be at God's Diſpoſal, and to be directed by

Him, and desirous chiefly to advance his Glory, as appears by this Passage in his Diary; ——— "Jan. 29. 1706--7. This Day I had sweet "Communion with God in Secret Prayer. The "Lord helped me wonderfully to plead with his "Majesty, for Assurance, for a soft Heart, and "for his Holy Spirit, to sanctify me, comfort me, "guide and assist me; and for his Presence to "be with me, whether I remove from *Boxford* or "not. I pleaded, Lord, If thy Presence go not "with me, carry me not hence. Lord, I can't "go, unless Thou go with me. Lord, If thou "wilt not go with me, stop me, disappoint me, "Hedge up my Way with Thorns; Yea, let me "Dy, rather than go one Step without Thee, "Lord! If it be not for thy Glory, and for the "Good of Souls, —let me be here continued: I "know that Thou art Alsufficient, and canst "provide for me here; and deliver me from my "Temptations here; and therefore I will wait "upon Thee in the use of lawful Means, to "know what thy Will is. Lord, help me so to "do, *&c.* After this, as I am informed, he obtained the *Consent* of his Church and Town, and had the *Advice* of the Neighbouring *Elders*, to remove. And the People at *Bradford* then invited him to succeed his *Father* (who died about this time, *April*, 1708.) in the Ministry there; whither he was removed and installed in the Pastoral Office, sometime in the Year 1708. where he spent the rest of his Life.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

His Marriages, Family, &c.

HE first married——Mrs. *Elizabeth Blowers* of *Cambridge*; Sister to the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Blowers* of *Beverly*. By her God was pleased to build up his Family, giving him Seven very hopeful and desirable Children; one of whom died young, the other Six are still alive, Four Sons and Two Daughters: The Eldest Daughter, the Reverend Mr. *Wadsworth*, now President of Harvard College, in *Cambridge*, hath taken into his Family, since her Father's Death, whom God reward for his Charity. The Mother of these Children was taken from Them by Death *April.* 6. 1714. Mr. *Symmes* was married again *March* 28. 1715, to Mrs. *Hannah Pike*, Daughter of the Reverend Mr. *John Pike* of *Dover*: by whom He had Two very desirable Daughters now surviving. Near the time of her Delivery of a Third Child, (before She was Delivered) Her Soul Departed like *Rachel's*; Feb. 1. 1718--19. Afterwards he was married the Third Time,——to Mrs. *Eleanor Moody*, Relict of the late Mr. *Eliezer Moody* of *Dedham*, Daughter to the well known Mr. *Benjamin Thompson* of *Brantree*, who now survives under a second Widowhood.

It may be wondred at, and bewailed by Some, that this Excellent Person, A Minister of the Fourth Generation, in an uninterrupted Line, should bring up None of his Sons to inherit his Learning, and Succeed him in the Ministry. It

was not, as is well known, for want of a very great Value for Theſe Things;—— but a principal Reaſon was a want of Eſtate ſufficient; for though He had as good a Maintenance as moſt Other Miniſters in the *Country*; yet he could not (and no other Miniſter in the Country can, whatever ſome may think) bring up a Son at the College, beſides ſuitably maintaining his Family, with 100 *l.* per Annum, (paid in our Province-Bills, as they now run) without having ſome other Income, or neglecting his Studies and Miniſtry more than he did. However, he was not without Thoughts, of late Years, to endeavour it for his youngeſt Son; but 'tis fear'd, it muſt now fail, unleſs ſome Benefactors may be raiſed up.

CHAP. V.

His Learning.

HE was a Man of very quick and ſtrong Intellectual Powers, had a conſiderable large Library of his Father's and Grandfather's; was very Studious as well as Pious, and very much diſinclined from the Cares of the World; and therefore muſt needs arrive to conſiderable Learning. He was indeed under ſome Diſadvantages for it, by reaſon that his Books were moſtly old; and his Circumſtances of Life for a great while low and difficult, which was very contrary to a Man of his Generous Diſpoſition, and had a tendency to cramp his Genius, and in ſome meaſure detain him from going abroad, to receive the Advantage of a Learned Converſation.——

tion.—— But notwithſtanding, he retained his College Learning very well, inſomuch that he has ſometimes at his Family-Worſhip, read out of the *Hebrew* Bible into *Engliſh* very currently, and undertook a few Years ſince to Tutor two Junior *Sophiſters* from the College:— and uſed commonly once a Year, to go over the Liberal Arts and Sciences. And being a great Reader, by borrowing Books, he got acquainted with the moſt conſiderable modern Authors in Hiſtory and Divinity.

CHAP. VI.

His Principles.

IN the grand Articles of reveal'd Religion, his *Principles* were *Calviniſtical*. Though, I have heard him ſay, That, in his younger Time, while a Student at the College, he was more in favour with the human and lax Principles of the *Arminians*: But afterwards, when he came to be more ſettled in his Studies, and experienced in Chriſtianity, he grew very ſtanch in the Doctrines of Original Sin, Grace and Predeſtination, Juſtification by Faith, through CHRIST's Righteouſneſs imputed, perſeverance of the Saints, *&c.* In *Circumſtantials*, and Matters of Indifferency, he was not at all preciſe; He neither confined his Charity to thoſe of his own Perſwaſion, nor yet extended it to ſuch as deſtroy the main Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, or live in groſs Immoralities. In *Church-Government* his Principles were Congregational, according to Dr. *Owen*, whom

whom he called the *Atlas* of Congregationaliſm; and according to Mr. *Richard Mather*'s Explanation of *N. E.* Platform, (publiſhed by his Son Dr. *Increaſe Mather*,) who had a principal Hand in drawing up the Platform. 'Twas a Principle with him, that all Acts of Church Government ſhould be done *Conſentiente Plebe*. He was very much for Order and Union among the Churches, and ſtanding by their preſent Conſtitution, at leaſt until they could agree upon a Better. And though he was of Opinion, that the Platform was not, in all reſpects, a ſufficient Plan, conſidering the preſent State of the Churches, and wiſhed for a Reformation in ſome things; yet "he highly diſliked that Apoſtacy which ſome "in *N. E.* have been guilty of, in departing "from the Profeſſion which they once made: "And though he was not perhaps ſo forward "as ſome at firſt, to condemn them, ſo as to "look on them as Men utterly forſaken of God; "Yet he was through their Fall, (afterwards,) "eſtabliſhed more firmly in the Principles of "Presbyterian Ordination and Government, in "oppoſition to Dioceſan Epiſcopacy, and alſo "in oppoſition to the eſtabliſhed Ceremonies of "the Church of *England*; and heartily wiſhed for "their Repentance.

CHAP. VII.

His Religion or Piety.

I Shall nextly give the Reader ſome Account of his Religion and exemplary Piety. As for

for the publick Teſtimonials of it, I refer you to the foregoing Sermon; but for his private Devotion and Walk with God, I ſhall here have recourſe to his Diary. And,

Sect. 1. I ſhall relate ſome Inſtances of his *Daily Devotion* in *Secret*. He was very Conſtant and Conſcientious in the Duty of *Secret Prayer*; as I gather from One paſſage in his Diary ſhewing what ſorrowful Reflection he had for once omitting of it. "I omitted Secret Prayer in the "Morning; I would be ſorry for it; though I "lifted up my Heart in Ejaculation, yet I did not "make a ſet Prayer."—He uſed this together with private Reading the Scriptures, as an eminent means to preſerve him from Temptation. Once when he had grievouſly fallen into ſome Sin, he remarks upon it, "N. B. I neglected to Read in "Private in the Morning, and was Perfunctory in "my ſecret Devotions." But he was commonly very Devout and Fervent herein; and, to uſe his own expreſſion, "Prayed in his Prayers:" uſed to wreſtle and plead with God, and fill his Mouth with Arguments, and to look after his Prayers; and recorded ſome of them, to ſee how he prevailed. And often met with comfort and ſometimes Aſſurance in the Duty. For Inſtance; Once, ſays he, "I found much comfort & encou-"ragement in pleading the Covenant with God, "Urging the Stock of Prayers laid up for me by "my Godly Anceſtors: O that all the Children "of Godly Parents would practice this more. My "Children, If ever this Book fall into your Hands, "I charge you to take notice of this and Act ac-"cordingly! O don't neglect it, my Dear Chil-

"dren!

"dren! You are Children of many Prayers: "but don't truſt to That, but pray for your ſelves, "and look upon That as an Encouragement ſo "to Do." At another Time —— "I hope I "met with God in Prayer. God helped me in "renewing my Acceptance of Chriſt; I pleaded "with Chriſt that I had nothing to bring along "with me, not a Tear, not a Sigh, not a Word, "not a Thought that was really good, which "wonderfully affected me. I pleaded with God "Jer. 3. 1. *And Yet return unto Me, ſaith the Lord.* "and I found great Comfort in it. I pleaded "with Chriſt to be my King, to rule my Heart "and all my Senſes and Members, and Faculties "and Paſſions of my Soul. I pleaded with Chriſt "to come and dwell in my Heart, acknowledging "that it was Dirty and Filthy, but if He wou'd "he cou'd cleanſe it.— At another Time ſays he, "I pleaded with God that Promiſe, *They ſhall be* "*filled.* I pleaded that God had given me an "Appetite after Spiritual Things; that God "knew I valued Grace above all the World; and "therefore prayed he would fill me full of "Knowledge, Faith, Love, *&c.* Yea, with all "the Fulneſs of God." Once more he writes,— "This Morning it pleaſed God of his infinite "Mercy, and rich Grace, to give a good mea-"ſure of Aſſurance in Prayer to him. I was "aſſured, and am, that I deſire to be the Servant "of God, to Love him and Fear him. I was "brought to be able to ſay, *I am thy Servant,* "*the Son of thine Handmaid, thou haſt looſed my* "*Bonds.* I was enabled alſo to ſay, *I will hum-*"*bly repreſent my Condition to thee, and leave it with*

"*thee,*

" *thee, to deal with me as thou wilt in time*——
" *Glorify thy ſelf in me and by me* —— *Let me truſt*
" *in the Lord*—— I am perſuaded with the Apo-
" ſtle, *Rom.* 8. *ult.*

On this wiſe did he not only *ſtatedly* Morning and Evening, and ſometimes thrice a Day, viſit the Throne of Grace; but at many other times *occaſionally*; ſometimes with a dear Friend, and ſometimes aroſe in the *Night* and prayed; beſides frequent Ejaculations, lying down and riſing up.

Beſides this he daily practiced *Self Examination*, which he engaged himſelf to by a Vow, according to Mr. *J. Alliene*'s Direction, in a Diſcourſe from *Deut.* 32. 46. in his Remains. He reſolved alſo every Evening to conſider what Evidences he had of his good Eſtate, Some of which I ſhall here tranſcribe. —— " This Evening I
" could ſee no Evidence clearer, than my being
" *poor in Spirit.* I think God has ſhown me that I
" am nothing, have nothing, can do nothing, de-
" ſerve nothing but Hell, and that I have deſerv-
" ed times without number." The next Day.
" My Evidence. I Deſire to fear God's Name, ſo
" far as I know my own heart. (which I had need
" always put in, for my Heart is very deceitful.)
Again " My Evidence laſt night. That I have
" an heart to forgive ſuch as injure me". Again, ſays he, "My Evidence I gather from thoſe words,
" *I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed.*
" I hope God has ſlain the Enmity, naturally in
" me againſt his People, and that I love all ſuch
" as have God's Image, with a pure heart fervent-
" ly, and even ſuch as through miſtake are my

"Perſonal Enemies." At another time he writes. "I met with Encouragement from Mr. "*Baxter*'s REST, his Deſcription of Juſtifying "Faith; That it is *An Affectionate Receiving of* "*Chriſt as Lord and Saviour.* I am perſuaded that "I ſo do; and that *I am willing to part with all ſin*, "this he ſays is a certain mark. Sometimes his Evidences were mixed with clouds, ſaying "I am "ſtrangely unſtedfaſt, much haunted with vain "Thoughts, afraid I don't grow in Grace but ra-"ther languiſh, LORD revive and quicken me. "I have neglected to conſider what Evidence in "the Evening, I muſt attend That. I cannot do "what I would. No, no, no, that I can't, God "knows. Lord, how would I live, how holily, "how humbly! Lord Jeſus, thou knoweſt!—— "I bleſs God, I hope my own Iniquity is in ſome "meaſure mortified. I muſt ſay, God is Good. I "muſt ſay, I Love God with all my Heart, and "love him for his Holineſs, ſo far as I know any "thing of my ſelf, and ſhou'd rejoice more than "in the time when Corn and Wine increaſe, "might I never ſin more." And Sometimes he was under Greater Fears, and very much in the Dark. —— "I am afraid all things are not right "between God and me, becauſe I fall ſo often in-"to Sin; Iniquities prevail againſt me." "I have "no clear Evidence of my Intereſt in Chriſt, "am much in the Dark. The Word does not do "me Good I fear; does not work effectually in "me. I fear whether there is a Spark of Grace "in me, I fall ſo often & foully into the ſame Sin. "O miſerable Man that I am, what ſhall I do to "be ſaved!" But his Sins made him the more humble,

humble, put him upon crying more earneſtly unto God. —— "O Lord, I am the *Chief* of Sinners, "my Heart hard; but I will never ceaſe crying "to the Lord till He give me a ſoft Heart, till He "take away my ſtony Heart, and give me an "heart of fleſh." "If ever I get to Heaven I "ſhall be the very greateſt Inſtance of Divine "Mercy that ever came thither. O wretched "Man that I am, Who ſhall deliver me from the "body of this Death? Lord Jeſus, I hope Thou "wilt do it."

He was Often very Thankful for Reſtraining Grace, and Lamented his Falls, and particularly the Haſtineſs of his Temper, Saying, "I have "cauſe to be humbled for the heat of my Spirit; "I am too paſſionate. I need to think oftener "of thoſe words, *Slow to Speak, ſlow to Wrath.* I "greatly tranſgreſs that Law. O wretched Man "that I am." —— Sometimes he notes, "I "ſat too long in Company, fear I was not Grave "enough," &c. —— Theſe are Inſtances of his ordinary *daily* Devotion and Piety in ſecret.

Sect. 2. I ſhall Inſtance in ſome of his Secret *Preparations* for the *Lord's Table*; which were very Solemn, and full of exemplary and experimental Piety: And he having recorded many of them to obſerve his own progreſs,— I ſhall tranſcribe ſome for the Help and Imitation of others.

ONCE he writes thus. "I find by woful Ex-"perience, a Perſon had need be peculiarly watch-"ful when call'd to ſpecial Ordinances. I am "now invited to a Feaſt; I am utterly unwor-"thy of ſuch an Honour as to ſit with the King "Heaven at his Table. But ſince I am invited,

" and infinitely need to come, it would be the
" greateſt folly for me to compliment my ſelf out
" of Happineſs. Nay, I am Commanded to
" come, and that's a ſufficient Warrant for my
" coming, tho' I ſee I deſerve no ſuch Favour, yet
" ſurely I ſhall not be blamed for Doing as I'm
" bid; No, there's no Danger There; Here's all
" the Hazard, I ſhan't come as I *ſhou'd* do; And
" then tho' I ben't condemned for doing my Du-
" ty, yet I ſhall for not Doing it as I ought. But
" now, Alas! how ſhall I poor, weak, ſinful
" Worm, be able to draw near to God aright? I
" can do nothing of my Self, and I have forfeited
" the Favour of God, don't deſerve He ſhou'd af-
" ford me the Aſſiſtance I need. 'Tis true, O
" my poor Soul, 'tis true: But yet the Mercy of
" God is free; The Fountain opened is free as
" well as full: God would have me come empty,
" and then He will fill me; He wou'd have me
" come hungry and thirſty, and then He'l ſatisfy
" me. O my Good God, create in me an Appe-
" tite to thoſe coſtly, delicious Dainties, Thou
" doſt invite me to feaſt upon, and give thy Bleſ-
" ſing with Them: that I may by them be nou-
" riſhed and ſtrengthened, and further fitted to do
" and ſuffer thy holy Will in this world, and to
" enjoy Thee in the other and the better world.
" I have made little progreſs I fear in my Chriſti-
" an Courſe ſince the laſt Sacrament. But I have
" abundant reaſon to bleſs God for Reſtraining
" Grace —— O that all Chriſtians were ſenſible
" of their Engagements to God on that Account."

Then He mentions ſpecial Petitions —— and Reſolutions ——

At

At another time, he writes. "Being Invited "to the Lords Table, I find my ſelf in a very dead "and dull indiſpoſed frame; I am at a great loſs "about my ſelf, I can't go with Aſſurance, but I "deſire to go for it; I have a dark benighted for-"ſaken Soul; O that Chriſt would vouchſafe to "kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth. I think I "can truly ſay, there is no Sin but I had rather "leave than live in. That I can heartily forgive "every Mortal that has any ways injured me, as "I deſire to be forgiven. ——— I particularly "need power againſt raſh Anger, and I deſire to "go with ſtrong expectations of receiving it. I "purpoſe to ſet my ſelf to endeavour eſpecially "the Mortification of raſh Anger, to endeavour "in all caſes to let my Yea be Yea, and my Nay, Nay."

At another ——— "I conſidered what war-"rant I have to go to the Sacrament, or what "reaſon I have to conclude that Jeſus Chriſt in-"vites me to his Table. And the reaſons are "ſuch as theſe. 1. Chriſt Invites ſuch as are his "Friends. *Eat O Friends* —. Now I hope I am a "Friend of the Bridegroom, becauſe I Deſire to "Do whatſoever he commands me. 2. He has "ſaid, *Whoſoever Will, let him come* — And I am "Willing; He has made me ſo in the Day of his "Power. 3. He has ſaid, *Let him that is athirſt "come*,— And I am athirſt. Nothing will, no-"thing can, nothing ſhall ſatisfy me without "Chriſt. Chriſt I can be ſatisfied with, without "any thing elſe; I hope, I deſire it may be ſo. "4. Chriſt has ſaid, *Come all ye that are weary* &c. "and I am ſo; Weary of all Sin, and deſire free-

"dom

" dom from it above any outward Mercy, I truſt.
" 5. He hath ſaid, *Let him that is Simple turn in*
" *hither, and as for him that hath no Underſtand-*
" *ing* &c. I am Simple and want Underſtanding.
" He has ſhown this abundantly— I hope I grow
" in Grace, and have found it good to draw
" near to God. I then conſidered what I would
" and ſhould go for; and if Chriſt ſhould ſay,
" *Ask what I ſhall give thee?* My Anſwer ſhall
" be, Thy, Self, Lord, and take me to be thine.
" He has all who has Him that has All. *Aug.*
" I deſire to go with longing Deſires, raiſed Ex-
" pectations, and fixed Reſolutions to endeavour
" to live to God's Glory. I am freely willing
" to come under the ſtricteſt Obligations to Je-
" ſus Chriſt.

Thus he uſed ordinarily to prepare himſelf,— and herein often found great Apprehenſions of the Love of Chriſt. Once he neglected to prepare himſelf in ſuch a manner; but obſerve how it fared with him. " I did not (ſays he) over-
" look my Experiences, nor ſpend the time in
" Preparation I have ſometimes done, it being
" Lecture-Week, and my Wife taken ill this
" Week; ſo that I thought all the time I had,
" was little enough to prepare for the publick
" Exerciſe. But alas! I never had ſo little ſen-
" ſible experience of God's Preſence in my Life;
" I never taſted ſo little Sweetneſs in Commu-
" nion with God. I had never, as I remember, ſo
" indiſtinct Apprehenſions; never was more
" ſtraitned: What ſhall I do? O I will by God's
" Grace, take more care to prepare my ſelf for
" this Ordinance, and humbly beg of God to
" follow

"follow the Ordinance with his Bleſſing, for his "free Mercy's ſake." And, the next Sacrament he writes, "I was very ſollicitous to get prepa- "red for the Ordinance; and tho' very defective "therein, yet I had much of God's Preſence and "Aſſiſtance, which I record to encourage to "takePains in preparatory Duties.

Sect. 3. I could give a very large Account of his *extraordinary* Piety, in his ſecret *Faſting*. He often kept Days of Prayer. Sometimes ſtated once a Month; ſometimes only Occaſional: Before the Sacrament often; Under ſome Temptations from within, or Afflictions from without; Under Reproach; To ſeek Direction in ſome important Affair; implore ſome ſpecial Bleſſings.—— And ſometimes with one or two of his deareſt Friends; Sometimes with a Neighbour of another Town; Oftentimes with his Wife; (And after the ſame manner he kept Days of Thankſgiving alſo.——) And this being a thing ſo worthy of Imitation, and what 'tis to be feared too many Chriſtians are ignorant and unexperienced in, I ſhall here ſet down one of his Faſt Exerciſes, (as he hath recorded it,) for their Inſtruction and Imitation.

"*July* 1. 1709. I ſet apart this Day for So- "lemn Prayer with Faſting. Began the Day, "after reading a Chapter or two, with a Prayer "for Preparation and Divine Aſſiſtance in the "Duties before me. I then read ſeveral Authors "for help in confeſſing my Sins; and ſpent the "whole time in the next Prayer in Confeſſion, "of firſt, my Original Sin; then of my Actual "Sins, of Commiſſion, in the ſeveral Places I

"had

"had lived, and Relations I have ſuſtained; "then of my Sins of Omiſſion; then of my Sins "againſt the Goſpel, in particular; then of my "Other Men's Sins; and inſiſted particularly on "thoſe I have fallen into in ſpecial Hours of "Temptation: And then acknowledged the Ag-"gravations my Sins have been attended with, "and finally judged and condemned my ſelf for "all, and lamented them before the Lord. In "the next Prayer I begg'd Forgivneſs of all my "ſins, Mortification, and Vivification. In the "next Sanctification of Afflictions, and Deliver-"ance from them, in due time; A Supply of all "needful Bleſſings for me and mine. A Bleſſing "on my Studies and Miniſtry; for Miniſterial Ac-"compliſhments; for Grace to carry becoming-"ly in all Relations. In the next, for my Wife, "Children, other Relations, Benefactors, Ene-"mies, the Church and Town; for *Boxford*, *Ha-"verhil*, and *Reading* †; for the Land; Succeſs of "the *Canada* Expedition. In the next, I gave "Thanks for all God's Benefits to me and mine; "concluded with begging forgiveneſs of all Sin-"ful Imperfections in the Day, Acceptance of "what was agreeable to God's Will; A Gracious "Anſwer."

This is an Inſtance of his *Spiritual Exerciſe* in Secret Faſting, which is the principal part, *Godli-neſs being profitable unto all things*: As to the exter-nal Part, Bodily Exerciſe; tho' it profiteth little in compariſon —— Yet as I have heard Him ob-ſerve, This profiteth too: But I know little con-cerning

† Which Towns were then deſtitute of ſettled Miniſters.

cerning this in his Secret Faſting, ſave that He uſed to worſhip — in the Loweſt Poſtures of Humiliation, oftentimes with Proſtration and the like. —— But if We may gueſs by his Manner of Faſting in Publick, He was very Exemplary for his Bodily Abſtinence as well as all other Tokens of Humiliation. In all Publick Faſts that he was called to attend, though out of Town; on any Occaſion that he was not ſo immediately concerned in, himſelf, he uſed commonly to Abſtain from Food intirely, from Evening to Evening; and carefully avoid all Worldly Buſineſs and Diſcourſe; And ſo likewiſe I have known him do when called to Aſſiſt in the Ordination of a Miniſter; (which he would have had always kept as a Faſt, after the Primitive Pattern Acts 14. 23.) In ſhort, When I think of his Carriage on Faſt Days, it brings to my mind the Scripture Pattern, in Iſa. 58. 15. (If I may apply it to Him in this Caſe) He *called* This *Sabbath* his Delight, the Holy of the Lord and Honourable —— not doing his own Ways, nor finding his own Pleaſure nor ſpeaking his own Words. But, to return.

I ſhall not Diſmiſs the two laſt Heads, without Obſerving, that as every Evening, commonly, in his Examinations, (which I noted before;) ſo more eſpecially, at his *FASTS* and *Meditations* before the *Sacrament*, he uſed to call to mind the *Evidences* of his Good Eſtate. Once in Preparation for the *Sacrament* he had theſe Thoughts. "What are my Evidences, ſome of them at leaſt? "1. I hope I am Effectually Called; becauſe I "deſire to hear and obey the voice of God. 2. I

" Hope I am a true Believer in Jesus-Christ: " Because I see the Insufficiency of my own " Strength, Wisdom and Righteousness; and the " sufficiency of Christ, in all his Offices; and de- " sire to take whole Christ with my whole Soul. " 3. I hope I Repent, for I hope I desire to be " convinced of all Sin, and do hate all Sin, and " desire to turn from it, and desire to do the " whole Will of God. I have many Fears;—— " arising chiefly from the strength of Corruption " after much Prayer *&c.*

And at one of his *Fasts* he writes thus; " How " defective have I been in getting, and gathering " and recording my Evidences! This is my Sin, " my Folly: I will, by God's Grace, do no " more so foolishly." And then proceeds to rea- son out the Evidences of his Conversion; and has recorded them after this manner. First, " Such " as are *Blessed* ones are Converted. But I trust " I am a blessed one. Ergo—— *Prob. Min.* 1 *Arg.* " *All that are poor in Spirit* are blessed ones: But " I am poor in Spirit, *Ergo*—— God has made " me to see that I am nothing of my self, have " nothing Spiritually Good, originally my own; " can do nothing but Sin; deserve nothing but " Misery——— Am in some measure willing " that God do with me what he please, only " that he will have Mercy upon me. I had ra- " ther be a Door-keeper —&c— I hope I truly " desire God's Glory and the Salvation of the " Elect, whatever becomes of me—— 2. *Arg.* " *All that hunger and thirst after Righteousness* are " blessed ones. But I hunger and thirst after " Righteousness. *Ergo*—— If my Heart deceive

" me

" me not, I desire all Grace. I desire it for Grace " sake. I desire it more than any thing of a " worldly nature. I had rather have Grace with- " out Gifts, than Gifts without Grace. I think I " desire Grace constantly, and so also the impu- " ted Righteousness of Christ.

" *Secondly*, Another general Argument that I am " in a state of Grace. They that have *any* true " Grace, are converted, and in a state of Grace. " But I hope I have some true Grace in me. " *Ergo*—— Particularly 1*st*. They that truly *Re-* " *pent* of Sin, are converted. But I truly repent of " Sin, I hope. *Ergo*—— They that truly hate all " Sin, and that because it is against God, and are " weary and heavy laden with Sin, and are free- " ly willing to confess their Sins, and to do so " as they can, and have Light, and are earnest- " ly desirous to be more and more convinced of " and humbled for Sin; and that are fixedly " resolved to maintain a constant Warfare a- " gainst all Sin, tho' never so secret, all their " Days; That judge and condemn themselves " for their Sins; and endeavour to know and " do their whole Duty, to God and Man; and " when they have done all, say, They are un- " profitable Servants, do truly repent. But This, " all this, and a great deal more, thro' the rich " Grace of God, I can truly say, so far as I know " my own Heart. *Ergo* ——— 2*dly*. Such as " truly Believe in Christ, are in a State of Grace. " But I believe in my dear Lord Jesus Christ. *Er-* " *go* —— I am much deceived, If He be not " most precious to me for Himself, as well as his

"Benefits: And I" ——— Here he was interrupted and so left his Argument unfinished.

There is one thing more remarkable, of his extraordinary Piety, to be Added to the forgoing Instances, namely, his *Religious Vows*, which he frequently annex'd to his daily Prayers, Fastings and Sacramental Preparations; and Especially under any pressing Difficulty, or want of a desired Mercy. Thus in the case of his removal from *Boxford*, In Imitation of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. latter end, he Vowed, That "if the Lord would make "way for his removal to *Bradford*, or any other "Place where he might be more comfortable, or "find out a way without his Removal, that he "might be more comfortable at *Boxford*——&c. "and find out a way that he might be delivered "from his oppressing Debts, and from the Temptations he met with—— he would then do his "endeavour to bring up one of his Sons to Learning, if they liv'd and took to it*. That he would "set himself to study the Interest of Christ and "promote it by Pastoral Visits and Laborious "Preaching. ——— That he would keep days of "private Fasting and Thanksgiving oftener than "he had done." Again, "If God would by "his

* The largeness of his Family, and his constant Application to his Studies and Ministry, with but a small Salary at that time, occasioned his running behind-hand in the World, which he could not easily recover; He was very much concerned about it, and often prayed for and devised proper Means to get out of his Incumbrances; and though he was never intirely free from them, yet I believe of late Years he was more Prosperous; and had begun to send his youngest Son to the Latin-School.

" his Providence find out a way that he might " get out of Debt, he promiſed to devote a cer- " tain part of his yearly Income to pious Uſes, " and ask advice as to the Quota " and afterwards he determined upon a Tenth of his Salary. At another time he made this Reſolution " If God " will withhold me from Sin I will give Him all " the Glory." And many ſuch like he made being willing to lay himſelf under all poſſible obligations to his Duty. Tho' he was ſenſible that raſh Vows were no ways beneficial but only enſnaring to Chriſtians, Yet They could not be too forward to oblige themſelves to Neceſſary Duties; and he look'd upon Religious Vows as a means to excite unto Duty; and therefore eſpecially before the Sacrament, he was forward to enter into particular and expreſs Bonds —— fixing and recording his Reſolutions againſt his moſt powerful Luſts and Temptations; to be moſt careful where he had been moſt defective before. This he did " *utterly deſpairing* of his own Strength to perform " them," much leſs, " thinking to merit any " thing by them," but he did it " that he might " be prepared for Mercy," and " depending on " Divine Grace to help him perform his Vows."

And moreover beſides ſuch Special Vows on particular Occaſions —— he had a more ſolemn way, in a moſt explicit formal manner, to Renew his Covenant with God, and engage himſelf unto all Duty; which I ſhall mention as another Inſtance of his Real Chriſtianity, and for an Example to Others; 'Twas after the Direction of Mr. *Joſeph Alliene*, in making a *Solemn Covenant —— in Writing, and preſenting it before the Lord, and Setting*

the

the Hand to it, and ſo laying it up for a Memorial &c. So Mr. *Symmes* did; wrote out the Covenant drawn up by Mr. *Alliene* in his Directions about Converſion; And Subſcribed it &c, and ſo time after time renewed it at his Faſts before the Sacrament; and ſometimes ſome of his moſt intimate Friends with him ——— as I find 4 or 5 times one Year, following, as he ſays, Mr. *Alliene*'s Direction in this matter &c.

Sect. 4. Having thus ſomewhat largely conſidered his Piety in Secret, I ſhall more briefly mention his *Family Religion*; which was alſo Devout and Exemplary. I find him ſometimes in ſecret preparing for Family Duties; once particularly, he purpoſed to read that Chapter in his Study, which he was to read in the Family, and think upon it in order to expound it, after the example of Mr. *Philip Henry*. As in his ſecret Worſhip his Geſture was ſometimes Proſtrate, ſo I find this note concerning his Family Prayer, that on ſuch a Day, He "began to Kneel." But what is more remarkable, was his Watchfulneſs in the Duty, regarding it not as a piece of Formality, and Cuſtomary Service; but conſidering what Spiritual Aſſiſtances and Enlargements he found in the Duty; ſeveral times recording —— "I "hope God helped in Family prayer &c. Bleſſed "be God." Singing Pſalms was a Duty, he very much prized and delighted in, and was excellently accompliſhed for; which I believe he neglected not in his Family from the Beginning, on Lord's Days at leaſt, but of late Years conſtantly obſerved, I think morning and evening. And he did what lay in his power, that this part of Worſhip

Worſhip might be more underſtood and revived in Families as well as Churches: —— Laid a good Foundation for it, by cauſing the Rules of Singing, to be well taught among his People, Introducing many new Tunes into his Aſſembly, Preaching and Printing in the Cauſe, (which unhappily has become matter of Conteſt in many places in the Country.) And he thought it was high time that our common Cuſtom of Reading the Line in Singing, ſhould be laid aſide, not only becauſe of its very much interrupting the Melody and ſometimes the Senſe, but becauſe the Reaſon of it now ceaſes, which was for the help of ſuch as could not read, or want of plenty of Pſalm Books; both which may now be ſufficiently remedied—— Accordingly he ſang ſo in his Family, and was once about to ſet up a Lecture to ſing in publick, without reading the Line.

As for his Family-Inſtruction and Government, I can give no particular Account; only that I find him ſometimes in his Diary miniſtring Corrections—— and alſo catechiſing the Children. But his extraordinary Spiritual Affection and deep Concern for their Good, I think ſufficiently appears by what he has left for them in Writing, which is here publiſhed at the end of this *Account*. He likewiſe directed them to the Reading of ſome particular Books of Piety; I think he gave and recommended Mr. *Burkitt* on the *New Teſtament* to one of his Sons; and adviſed and charged all his Children in a ſpecial manner, to read often and peruſe Mr. *Thomas Hooker* of the *Application of Redemption*.

Sect.

Sect. 5. I ſhall nextly here add, ſomething further of his *Piety*, conſidered a little more extenſively, in his *Occaſional* Diſcourſe and *Conferences* with his Neighbours. He often prayed, and endeavoured to furniſh himſelf for *Religious Conference*; I ſhall relate one or two Paſſages concerning it out of his Diary; ſhewing how Thoughtful he was to engage in and prepare for it; and alſo how deſirous he was of it, and how much Delight he took in it. "I think it may "be very proper for me very often in converſing "with Others, (ſays he) where I may; to ſay "as Arch-Biſhop *Uſher*, (and introduce it as his "Saying) *One Word of CHRIST before we part*: "and accordingly to have ſome ſuitable *Conſide-* "*ration* of Chriſt in readineſs to offer. Lord, re- "vive and quicken me." Again; Once having been viſited by a ſavoury Chriſtian, he writes; "It revives me to diſcourſe of Spiritual Things: "I wiſh it were more practiced. It never trou- "bles me afterwards when I thus diſcourſe, ſave "that I have diſcourſed no better.

I have heard that he was uncommonly furniſhed for agreeable Conference with the Sick: Indeed I once heard him diſcourſe a Sick Man; and he was very Compaſſionate and Familiar and Chearful, and very particular in his Directions, proceeding gradually from ſtep to ſtep, till he had led him to the Rock that was higher than he, to renew his Covenant containing all his Salvation —— He knew how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to weary diſconſolate Saints, as ſome of them have witneſſed; and to ſtupid impenitent

penitent Sinners: He was able to do it from his own Experiences; 'tis well known how ready he was, when Occasion call'd for it, to communicate his Knowledge and Experiences; the like I find in his Diary; (for he has sometimes recorded his Conferences with the Sick, together with some affectionate and earnest Pleadings with God, he was directed to use in Prayer:) I shall here relate one remarkable Passage and Great Saying, uttered to a Sick Man, who, he was afraid, wanted some taste of the powers of the World to come. "I told him, (says he) So far "as I know my own Heart, if I knew there "were no Hell, and had the offer either to be "made holy and live in a mean Cottage, a "poor despised Life; or to be Emperor of the "Universe, and have no Grace; I should chuse "Grace and a Cottage, rather than the Empire "without it."

CHAP. VIII.

His Labours in the Ministry.

THus far I have principally considered him in a private Capacity, as a *Christian*; I now proceeed to give some more particular and full Account of him also, considered in his more publick Capacity, as a Minister of the Gospel.

And,

Sect. 1. In his STUDIES and PREPARATIONS for the Pulpit. In these he studied in the first place to approve himself to God, by observing *Luther*'s Maxim, *Bene Oraſſe &c.* to direct

him in the choice of proper Subjects, and help him then in the moſt ſuitable manner to repreſent his Meſſages to the People. Nextly, He not only prayed, but meditated how he might beſt reach the Conſciences of Men; not only to perform his Task in Preaching, but to do them Good. [Accordingly I find he hath ſet down this Rule in his Bible; "In preparing to preach, don't "think, What will gain me Credit and Applauſe? "what will pleaſe the People? but think what "would Jeſus Chriſt ſpeak, and how would "Jeſus Chriſt ſpeak to this People, were He to "ſpeak to them immediately? and endeavour ſo "to ſpeak. 1 *Pet.* 4. 11] For this end he ſtudied Plainneſs, a clear eaſy Method, and moſtly Scripture Language: (which Chriſtians that are ſincere, are moſt likely to be acquainted with, and this being moſt quick and powerful;) Agreeably he ſet down in his Bible this Verſe;

Unus Apex Verbi, Ratione valentior omni,
Milleque Decretis, Conciliiſque prior.

And he ſtudied Men, not merely to know how to pleaſe their Ears, but how to reach their Hearts, moſt effectually. He conſidered the Spiritual Wants & Circumſtances of *Sinners* & *Saints*; & endeavoured to ſuit his Sermons to the various Aſpects and Turns of Providence over his own People or the Publick; in Sickneſs, Drought, Scarcity *&c.* Succeſs or Barrenneſs of his Miniſtry; any thing remarkable in the War, as the Overthrow at *Norridgawock*; the Fight at *Piggwacket*, on the latter of which he preached and printed; and the Death of Others, eſpecially of Good Men of Note, far or near —— He preached a Funeral Sermon on the

the Death of the *French* King, from *Prov.* 11.10.— *When the wicked periſh, there is ſhouting.*

Sect. 2. In the PULPIT, he was very much in his Element, full of Life and Courage; and tho' he took great pains, I ſcarce ever knew him complain of Wearineſs. He loved to be often there; and ſaid himſelf, He believed no Man took greater Delight in the Pulpit than he did. The ſtated Exerciſes which he performed, were Prayer, reading a Chapter out of the holy Scriptures, Singing, (which he did three times every Sabbath throughout the Year, and as often on Faſt Days;) Preaching, wherein he truly excell'd: His Sermons in themſelves were excellent; full of quick and bright Thoughts; the Publick has had ſome taſte of them in his few printed Diſcourſes *: But his extraordinary Delivery added a very great Beauty and Force to them; He ſometimes charmed his Auditory, like the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *Who was unto them as a very lovely Song, of one that had a pleaſant Voice, and could play well on an Inſtrument.*

He took a very good courſe to excel, propoſing to himſelf, in his younger Days, not only One, but Several whom he tho't the beſt Patterns. And he had a laudable Ambition; he aimed to excel, and yet ſought not his own Glory; for as the Reverend Mr. *Colman*, in the Preface to his *Artillery Election*-Sermon, intimates of him, "He

* His *Monitor* for Delaying Sinners; Artil. Elect. Sermon, 1720. Diſcourſe againſt Prejudice; Ordination Sermon at *Malden*; The People's Intereſt; The Brave *Lovewel* Lamented.

"was out of the way of Fame, or any worldly "Reward." And till of late Years, I think his Labours appeared but little abroad. His Aim was to do Good: 'twas the Commendation of Heaven he esteemed and desired. Agreeably I heard him once say, upon hearing of a certain Sermon preached in the Audience of the General Court, that was very acceptable to them, "How "much greater Honour is it to be accepted of "Heaven!"

Sect. 3. CATECHISNG he esteemed, and accordingly practised, as a very useful Ordidance and part of his Ministry, not only for the instructing of little Children; but the training up of Young Men, till they were settled in Religion compleat Christians, as well as settled in the World. Agreeably he not only went all over the Town, to Catechise *Children* as usual; but he sometimes in the Summer Season, called the Young Men, as many at a time as he thought convenient, to answer in the face of the Congregation on the Lord's Day, instead of reading the Scriptures in the Afternoon, (thereby proposing Advantage to the whole Assembly;—) asking them 2 or 3 Questions at most, at a time, in the Assembly's Catechism; and giving a short Exposition on the Answers, one at least: And so went on till he had gone through the Catechism.

Sect. 4. For ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE, he had very good Accomplishments, both natural and acquired; and was pretty well experienced in it, having had several perplexing Cases

Caſes to try his Skill and Courage; And he was heartily deſirous of reviving and bringing it to greater Perfection. He had a great value for the *Platform*, and made uſe of it to the utmoſt, with a reſpect to Order, and out of Regard to his Forefathers;—— Accordingly he read the ſubſtance of it to his Church, and made it binding to them by a Vote, "Reſolving and Promiſing "by the help of God, to practice according to "the ſubſtance of it, till God ſhould give them "further Light; or the Churches in the Country "be ſupply'd with a more correct and agreeable "Platform." And accordingly they choſe Ruling Elders to aſſiſt the Paſtor in all matters of Government in the Church. He was a very ſtrenuous Aſſerter of the power of the Presbytery, but far enough from uſurping the juſt Priviledges of the Laity: He would not ſuſpend a ſcandalous Brother, nor reſtore a Penitent, nor diſmiſs a Member, nor fix the ſtated Times for the holy Communion, but by a Vote of the Church, as I find by the Church-Book. And tho' for want of the ready Concurrence and Aſſiſtance of others, he could not do ſo much as he would in Church-Diſcipline, yet his Church was brought into exemplary Order: I ſhall relate one or two Inſtances;—— The *Brethren* I find have bound themſelves by a Vote, univerſally to attend all Church-Meetings, on penalty of being accounted Delinquents, and admoniſhed before the whole Church, unleſs they give ſeaſonable ſufficient Reaſons to the Elder or Elders for not attending——. And they have determined, that Sleeping at Meeting, eſpecially laying down the Head

Head to Sleep, in time of publick Worſhip, is a very great Indecency and Irreverence, and juſtly offenſive, and to be obſerved and reproved in any of the Church, eſpecially Communicants; and if not reformed, the Church is to be ſtayed after Exerciſe, and the Perſons are to be called forth before them, and admoniſhed.

He took great Pains, and went as far as he could, in bringing his Church to practice according to the Reſult of the Synod in 1662, in Diſciplining the Children of the Church; and to tell the Reader how far he proceeded in order hereto, as well as to revive and maintain Diſcipline in all its Branches; About 4 Years ago, he drew up a ſort of an Inſtrument *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, ſo intituled, and therefore I think worthy to be remembred here; which the Church voted, and above 80 of the Brethren ſigned. Taking into ſerious conſideration the 3d. *Prop.* of the Synod in 1662 *&c.* and alſo the 4th *Section* in the Expedients for Reformation, agreed upon and propoſed by the Synod in 1679.—— Likewiſe what is aſſerted by the Aſſociation at *Cambridge*—— in the Hiſtory of *New-England*, Book V. pag. 48.— And being informed that the Reverend Elders in the Neighbourhood, and ſome of the Churches had the ſame thing under conſideration, and convinced of their Obligations to watch over one another, and all baptized Perſons grown up; very ſolemnly and religiouſly promiſed to God and one another, to ſtudy to know and do their Duty to thoſe in full Communion, and to all the baptized among them; particularly, (in theſe Words) " *Firſt*, That we will be careful

" to

" to watch over one another, and admoniſh one " another of and for what we obſerve amiſs; " and to purſue the Directions given by our " Saviour in the 18th of *Matthew*, with reſpect to " ſuch as give Offence. *Secondly*, That we will " to our Power, be aiding and aſſiſting to our " Elders for the time being, in dealing with Of- " fenders, whether in full Communion or Chil- " dren of the Church; by readily appearing to " give in ſuitable Information and Evidence as " we can, in all Matters that may come before " them. *Thirdly*, That we will be careful not to " ſet any bad Example before thoſe that are " without, by a needleſs and unſeaſonable being " at the Tavern, and ſitting with vain Perſons, " and drinking intemperately; and will (by God's " help) take it kindly of any that ſhall in a Chri- " ſtian manner, admoniſh us of any thing of this " Nature they obſerve in us. *Finally*, That we " will readily ſubmit to, and to our utmoſt, de- " fend and vindicate our Elder or Elders for the " time being, and the Church, in whatever Cen- " ſures conſonant to Reaſon, Scripture and the " Platform of Diſcipline, they ſhall have occaſi- " on to paſs on any amongſt us, that may be ſo " unhappy as to expoſe themſelves thereto." Voted *Jan.* 17. 1721--2.—— Thus far Mr. *Symmes* proceeded with his own Church, in this weighty but almoſt obſolete Matter of Church-Diſcipline, particularly with reſpect to the Children of the Church; this he did partly to encourage and ſtrengthen other Churches in this Duty; as he was often perſuading them by their Paſtors unto the ſame. For this end alſo he was ſtriving to form

form the neighbouring Churches into a Conſociation; propoſed it unto his own Church, who voted to ſend to the neighbouring Churches about it; accordingly he prepared a Letter,—— but meeting with ſome Diſcouragement, it failed.

Sect. 5. Beſides theſe ſtated Parts of his Miniſtry, he took OTHER OCCASIONS of doing Good to Souls. Once a Fortnight he uſed commonly to attend a private Meeting of ſober Chriſtians, where he uſed to Pray, Read or Preach a Sermon; and occaſionally attended other ſuch Societies in the ſame manner. Once a Month, he uſed to preach a publick Lecture, as long as he thought it Serviceable to Religion. And once a Month, ſince his Lectures were laid down, carried on a Church-Faſt, in preparation, before the Sacrament. And not rarely appointed occaſional Faſts in publick, beſides promoting and aſſiſting in the ſame in neighbouring Towns. Once a Quarter, or oftener, he preached at a Young Men's Meeting, a Sermon ſuited to the Riſing Generation, which he had much at heart: The firſt Sermon he printed, was preached on ſuch an Occaſion. He was careful to viſit the Sick at all times, eſpecially if they ſent for him, which he expected from them as their Duty*. And he made a Buſineſs of Perſonal Application to Souls.—— I have known him, ſince my ſhort acquaintance with him, deſire all his young People, that had not come to the Lord's Table, to come to his Houſe on certain ſet Days in the Week,

* Jam 5. 14. *Is any Sick? Let him ſend for the Elders of the Church.*

Week, at which times he diligently examined and gave ſuitable Directions to each one ſingly; and thus went on with his Hands full from Morning to Night, till he had gone thro'——: Soon after this, I think he had a very great Addition to his Church. At another time he has propoſed to go himſelf to each Houſe in the Town, about 2 or 3 in a Day, and gave Notice on the Sabbath, where and when he intended to viſit, that the People might be at home——; and thus went the Rounds, endeavouring to know the ſtate of his Flock, to quicken, ſtrengthen and comfort them; in which ſet and ſolemn Viſits, he ſuffered nothing to divert the religious Errand he went upon; as in occaſional unexpected Viſits is too common, and much more difficult to avoid.

Sect. 6. There is one thing more very remarkable, and fit to be remembred of him, as a wiſe and faithful Miniſter and Watchman; *viz.* His great Care and Endeavour for the PEACE and SETTLEMENT of his People after his DECEASE: Something of this is to be ſeen in his *Farewel-Advice*, which he left plainly tranſcribed for them, publiſhed at the End of this Account: Beſides this, he openly manifeſted it in the Pulpit many Years before his Death; in a Sermon which he purpoſed to tranſcribe to leave with them, ſhewing how they ſhould proceed from Step to Step, in chuſing a Miniſter after his Death *&c.* but his ſudden Death has prevented it, with ſome other things of the like Nature. However his Thought of it is worthy of our Remembrance, and the Sermon deſerves now to be

called to mind; And, I find, is capable, the moſt of it, of being Tranſcribed. And it muſt needs be a word in Seaſon to his People, and I hope may be a word of Weight and Force with them under their preſent Circumſtances; both becauſe 'twas prepared as the Dying Advice of their now Departed Friend and Faithful Inſtructor; and therefore ſhould be received with Solemnity as his Voice from the Dead: And alſo becauſe, it having been preached 9 Years ago, and looking forward ſo far as this time, it muſt needs be thought moſt Impartial Advice, without any Prejudice or Biaſs'd Reſpect to any thing peculiar in their Circumſtances now: And the nature of the Subject clears the Author from any Colour of Self-Intereſt in it; and his People will always, I preſume, at leaſt now, maintain ſuch a Veneration for him, as with all Readineſs to follow ſuch Important Advice, (as far as conſonant to the Word of God) which he was at the pains to prepare ſo long before hand. And moreover it may be uſeful for other Deſtitute Towns and Churches to Receive the ſame Advice; and for all People to have thoſe things in Remembrance againſt the Departure of their Teachers from them.

Theſe things conſidered, I ſhall venture to publiſh the ſubſtance of the Sermon, the latter Part entirely, as I might do the Whole, but that I find the Author has not left the former Part ſo plain either as to Matter or Method, deſigning to tranſpoſe ſome things. If I don't do Juſtice to the Author, I hope the Reader will make Allowance for it, as a poſthumous Piece.

[Vid. Chap. XI. Sect. 6.]

Theſe

Theſe are ſome of the viſible Inſtances of the Travel of his Soul, and his abundant Labours in the Evangelical Work; I ſhall go on now briefly to relate ſomething of the Fruit of his Labours.

CHAP. IX.

His Succeſsfulneſs in his Work.

DIvine Providence has been obſerved to bear Witneſs many times, that his *Prayers* with his People, were heard and come up for a Memorial before God; in removing or preventing Sickneſs; obtaining Rain or fair Weather *&c.* When he has laboured under any perplexing and almoſt hopeleſs Difficulties and Diſorders in the Church, God did always at length, ſo ſucceed his Skill and unwearied Courage in *Church-Government*, as to give a comfortable and happy Iſſue; without ſo much as calling a Council, which has ſometimes been deſired and expected. But his *Preaching* and *Paſtoral Viſits* have been followed with remarkable Succeſs. The Church was almoſt Trebly increaſed in the 17 Years of his Miniſtry. He admitted 232 Perſons to the Lord's Table, —at *Bradford*; and had at the Communion at once, as he has remarked, 234; (*Jun.* 11. 1723.) The whole Church now conſiſts of near 250, and the Town but about ſix ſcore Families. He had ſometimes added to the Church in that ſmall Town, Twenty or Thirty in a Year; and oftentimes Five or Six at a time: And in one Year (1720) 59 were admitted to the Sacrament, and 46 of them in three Months time, and 25 in one Day.

But what moſt of all adds to his Honour and Crown in this matter, is his humbleneſs of Mind under all, devoutly aſcribing all the Praiſe to God alone. As often as there were any Additions to the Church, conſiderable either for the Number, or perhaps the Hopefulneſs of the Perſons, He has recorded with their Names, *Soli Deo Triuni ſit omnis Gloria*; *Laus Deo in eternum. Gloria Deo in Excelſis. Non mihi ſed Tibi, Domine Jeſu. To God be all the Glory* †. He did not forget to be thankful for ſmall Additions as well as great; I obſerved particularly, the Year after that great Addition to his Church, when there were but two Perſons added in the whole Year, he affixed his uſual Doxology, *Laus Deo.*

CHAP. X.

His Sickneſs and Death.

HE was naturally a Man of a firm Conſtitution, and by his Countenance, and activity in his Work, generally appeared to be in perfect Health, till his laſt Sickneſs, which was ſcarce ten Days before his Death: It was therefore ſomething ſurprizing, even to his Phyſicians, to ſee him ſo ſuddenly fallen into ſuch "a Cachectic "and Scorbutic Habit of Body" as they inform me he was, "the Craſis of his Blood being entire-"ly deſtroyed, the Natural Secretions all per-"verted, with univerſal Extravaſations appear-"ing in the muſculous Parts of his Body, and

† In the Church-Book at *Bradford*, and at *Boxford*.

"great

" great Hemorrhaes from the Mouth and Fauces, " which continued till he died".

'Tis ſuppoſed this might be owing to " his ſe- " dentary and very ſtudious Life, & extraordina- " ry Care upon his Mind, (eſpecially towards the very laſt, which might haſten on his Diſtempers;) But tho' he uſually appeared Sound and Well, yet I have obſerved him ſeveral Years, at times, labouring under ſometimes a very ill Appetite and Digeſtion; ſometimes extraordinary Pains either in his Head, Breaſt or Back *&c.* So that his fatal Diſeaſes might be all this while growing upon him: But however, it was with ſo much Moderation, that he bore up under them, and conſtantly carried on his publick Miniſtry; ſo that he was confined but one Sabbath, till he began his everlaſting Reſt; tho' indeed the laſt Sabbath that he preached, he was very faint, having once or twice bled conſiderable Quantities at the Noſe; but yet ſent not for a Doctor till about a Week before his Death, when the Iſſue of Blood could hardly be ſtop'd: And tho' indeed after about 26 Hours bleeding, it was ſeemingly ſtop'd (by " the uſe of many powerful " Remedies"; and the Prayers of a Religious Society making Interceſſion for him at that Interim, to which he principally aſcribed it) yet one of his Phyſicians tells me that " his Bleeding ſtill " continued either at the Noſe or Mouth, to the " laſt hour of his Life;" (or at leaſt inwardly, he thinks;) which tho' he looked upon only as a Symptom of his Illneſs, yet it ſo " weakned him, " and filled his Stomach" with the putrid Gore, that it " was a moſt deſtructive Symptom" in him.

After

After he was confined by his Sickneſs, he was ſoon reduced to ſuch extream Weakneſs and Faintneſs, that he could ſcarce bear the Company of his Friends, much leſs talk freely to them himſelf: However, being naturally full of Diſcourſe, he was very deſirous of ſaying what he could; and wiſhed he could ſay more, that "ſeeing he "had done ſo little for God in his Life, he might "Glorify him in his Death." What he ſaid was principally concerning himſelf; He deſired to ſearch and examine himſelf, and wiſhed he "might get ſafe to Heaven." He was once in his Sickneſs under Clouds; and tho't with himſelf, (as he told me) "What if I am deceived all "this while, what will become of me then?" In which caſe, he ſaid, he endeavoured to take "that "Advice to the Angel of the Church of the *Laodiceans, (Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich—— and knoweſt not that thou art wretched and miſerable* &c.) "*I counſel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayeſt be rich, white Raiment that thou mayeſt be clothed* &c. and found great Comfort "in it." Afterwards he had a very ſweet Peace and Calmneſs——. Till within 4 or 5 days of his Death, he was in ſome hopes of Recovery, being willing to live longer for the ſake of his Family and People; though he was not terrified at the Thoughts of Death, yet was he deſirous to prepare for it, and to get good by his Affliction: For this end he ſaid, he had endeavoured to take to himſelf the Advice which he was wont to give others in ſuch a caſe, which was "to renew their Covenant by Faith and Repentance, and make their Vows to ſerve God better in every Rela-

Relation;" and he found it very comfortable Advice. When he told me this, he expreſs'd his great Humility, Nothingneſs, Self-abhorrence, under a ſenſe of the vileneſs of his Heart, and his paſt unexemplarineſs and unprofitableneſs; and manifeſted his entire Reliance on Chriſt's Righteouſneſs for Juſtification before God: And hoped, if he ſhould live, he ſhould do better in every Relation: And alſo reckoned up ſome of the good Evidences he had then, to this purpoſe, ſaying, "Chriſt hath ſaid, *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for* "*theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*—— *Bleſſed are* "*they that hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for* "*they ſhall be filled.* I can truly ſay, I have for "many Years deſired Grace for Grace ſake, not "not as a ſinking Man deſires a Boat to ſave him "from drowning, but becauſe grace makes him "like God, fits him to *ſerve* God, and prepares to "*enjoy* Him. Chriſt hath ſaid, *If ye forgive Men* "*their Treſpaſſes, your Heavenly Father will forgive* "*you*: I can truly do That.—— I have abun-"dance of Sin in me, but I hope I can ſay with "the Apoſtle, *That which I do, I allow not; but* "*what I hate*——. I have not loved Sinners in my "Life; I hope God will not gather my Soul "with them when I die. I have loved the Peo-"ple of God, and deſired their Company, I hope "I ſhall go to be with them.—— I can truly ſay, "I never begrutched any Pains in my Miniſtry, "was always willing to ſpend and be ſpent, and "I hope I did from a good Principle and for a "right end;—— yet not I, but the Grace of "God. Alas, I am nothing *&c.*"—— He then deſired there might be a Faſt kept on his Account, appointed

appointed the Time for it, ſent to the neighbouring Miniſters to aſſiſt in it, and pray for him in the mean time with their Congregations on the Lord's Day. This was *Friday* Evening. After this he ſaid little, but as he had ſeveral times done, that his preſent "Affliction was the moſt "profitable Affliction he ever met with in his "Life" *&c.* On the Lord's Day he inclined very much to ſleep, and took little or no Notice of his Friends from that time; but lived till *Tueſday*, which was the Faſt: But all the united Prayers of his own praying People (and other godly Friends) that uſed with him to obtain great things by Prayer, could not obtain his Life. In the Afternoon the Aſſembly was interrupted with Apprehenſions of his Change: A Miniſter was ſent for from the Meeting-Houſe to pray with him before he expired, who did accordingly; and upon asking him if he was "freely willing "to reſign his Soul to his Saviour" *&c.*—— He lifted up his Hand, and ſaid, *Yes.* After which he was not able any ways to expreſs his Mind; but continued breathing till a little after Midnight; and then his Breath went forth, and ſet his Soul at liberty to aſcend unto God, and left a pleaſant Corps, yet a mournful Spectacle, to return to the Earth. *Oct.* 6. 1725. *Ætatis* 48.

His Body was laid in the Grave the next *Friday*, *Oct.* 8th. with due Reſpect and Solemnity. And his People, who had about two Years before added 30 Pounds to his Salary for that Year, (and ſome particular Perſons in the Town made him a Collection of five and twenty Pounds the ſame Year;) and the laſt Year very chearfully added

40

40 Pounds, which together with his Salary, made 140 *l.* likely to have continued yearly, went on ſtill to ſhew kindneſs after his Death, and engaged 50 Pounds towards his Funeral Charges, beſides making plentiful and very handſome Proviſion for the Refreſhment of the Mourners and other Friends and Strangers, the Evening after his Funeral, by their bountiful Preſents; and have ſince voted to pay his full Salary to the Year's end, more than Three Months after his Death: Who I hope will not find it in vain to continue their Miniſterial Liberalities, and *not leave off their Kindneſs to the Living and to the Dead.*

Thus departed this very uſeful Man, who in leſs than a fortnight after Preaching, went down into Silence, ſudden to us, tho' not ſurpriſing to him: Who ſeems to have had his Deſire, who was ſometimes ready to wiſh on ſome Accounts, that he might not live to be an old Man; and uſed to ſay, 'twas "more pleaſant for a Candle "to be fairly extinguiſhed whilſt fully burning, "than go out in a Snuff and leave a Stink; and "more glorious for the Sun to ceaſe ſhining in "its full Meridian, than to ſet in a Cloud." He deſired more to do Service, than to live long: And he ſeems to have been ſomewhat apprehenſive of a ſudden Death; and therefore began timely, in a formal manner, to take his Leave of the World; leſt, as it has proved, he ſhould not have Opportunity in his dying Hours, to ſpeak his Mind; as, his *Advice* to his Children and Servants, and *Farewel* to his People, in the following Chapter ſheweth; which was partly begun many Years before his Death.

CHAP. XI.

Being a *Supplement* or *Appendix* to the foregoing ACCOUNT,

Containing ſome diſtinct Writings of Mr. *T. Symmes*, upon ſeveral Miſcellaneous Subjects.

Above 17 Years ago, he began to write his Advice and Charge to his Children; wrote a prefatory Epiſtle, ſet down ſome Minutes of the Advice; but then laid it by, a conſiderable time: I find him ſeveral times, in his Diary, purpoſing to proceed therein; but don't find that he did, till as near as I can gueſs, about a dozen Years ago, when he began to write "*A Farewel to the* "*World*, under theſe Heads, 1. *To my Wife.* 2. *To* "*my Children.* 3. *To all that are or have been my* "*Servants.* 4. *To the Church and Town of Bradford.* "5. *To Boxford.* 6 *To my Relations.* 7. *To my Be-*"*nefactors.* 8. *To my perſonal Enemies.* 9. *To the* "*Miniſters of the Goſpel, my Fellow-Labourers.* 10. *To* "*New-England.* 11. *To my Nation.* 12. *To the* "*Jews.* Finally, *To the World of Mankind.*" He did not live to write upon all theſe; However we ſee by this, not only his Thôtfulneſs of Death ——; but the noble Deſign which was in his Heart, ſhewing ſomething of his Catholick Spirit, and extenſive Charity, and Concern for all Mankind.—— I ſhall gratify the Readers ſo far as to ſet down ſomething that he did write under

under ſome of the Heads mentioned; which they will doubtleſs eſteem worth the reading, and very uſeful and applicable to any others in like Circumſtances.

Sect. I. Mr. Symmes's *Advice to his Children.*

He ſuperſcribes it thus——

My *Advice* and *Charge*, which I leave with my dear Children *Thomas*, *Andrew*, and *John*, and *Elizabeth*; began *Feb.* 12. 1707--8.

By me *T. Symmes.*

The Prefatory Epiſtle to my Children.

My Dear Children,

SInce I know not the Day of my Death, have no aſſurance to live until you are capable of being adviſed and charged by me, by Word of Mouth, I have thought it my Duty to leave behind me (if it be God's Will) ſomething that may hereafter be of Uſe to you; and that may let you underſtand you have had a Father unſpeakably concerned for your everlaſting Happineſs; and not altogether unconcerned for your Happineſs in this World.

God only knows with what inexpreſſible Agony of Soul I have carried you all before the Throne of Grace, and have pleaded for your Salvation, as for my own.

I have given you all to God in *Baptiſm*, and laid you all under indiſpenſible Obligations to

forſake the Fleſh, World and Devil; and to be the Lord's wholly, only and for ever.

I have choſen and taken the Lord Jehovah, Father Son and holy Ghoſt, to be *your* God. And he *will* be your God for ever, and your Guide even until Death, if you don't wickedly neglect or refuſe; when you come to age, to renew your Baptiſmal Covenant, and to live agreeably thereto.

I am like to have nothing conſiderable of an earthly Nature to leave with you or for you: But the ſame God who has provided for *me*, is able to provide for you. And if you walk uprightly, you ſhall want nothing that God ſees good for you. My Sons, *God will provide.* Only keep in his Way, and *remember his Commandments to do them.*

I have been followed a long time with an unaccountable Impulſe on my Spirit, that ſomething I muſt leave for you in writing: And not knowing but it may be, and hoping that it is, *of God*; I have undertaken to make an Eſſay of this kind. And I am the more inclined to do ſo, becauſe I know not how God may deal with me, or with you after my deceaſe.

And now, *my Children*, I pray God be your God, as he has been the God of your Fathers in many Generations. I pray God to own and bleſs my poor Endeavours for your eternal Good; that you may be effectually awakened, enlightned, thoro'ly converted, juſtified, adopted, ſanctified, & at length glorified in the higheſt Heavens. And I pray you, and charge you, ſeriouſly and frequently to read and meditate on what I have now written.

I

I have desired to write as a Man *passing into Eternity*; and just what I would have said to you all, (had you been capable of understanding it) had I been sure never to have spoken a Word more unto you.

See then that you read it from time to time, with such Thoughts as these, *Thus would my dear* Father *advise and charge me*, were he now alive.

Your loving Father,

T. Symmes.

[When he wrote this Preface, he did not go on with his Advice, but only set down some Minutes to be after enlarged: But some Years afterwards he went on, in another Paper, thus.]

To my dear Children, *Thomas*, *Andrew*, *John*, *Elizabeth* and *Zechariah* *.

MY dear Children; for whom I have travailed in Birth, that Christ might be formed in you! I have scarce miss'd a Day, since you were any of you born, but I have prayed for you by Name. You are Children of the Covenant. There is a large stock of Prayers laid up for you: I have, according to my poor measure, given you to God, and exercised Faith for you. God knows how often, and with what Agony and unutterable Groaning, I have prayed God, that you might all live in his Sight: That you

* 'Tis not for want of as great Affection, nor because the following Advice don't belong to his other Children, *Anna*, *Abigail* and *Sarah*, that their Names are not mentioned, but because they were not then born; and their Father would doubtless have directed it to them also, if he had had time to revise and transcribe it before his Death.

might

might be all taught of God: That he would give you perfect Hearts: That he would be your Father, and the Guide of your Youth: That God would provide for you, and diſpoſe of you all as might be moſt for his Glory, and your Good. I have deſigned divers Years, to write ſomething by way of Advice and Charge to leave with you. But I have conflicted with ſuch uncommon Difficulties, that have been a great hindrance to me. I yet intend, if God ſpare my Life, to draw up ſome Directions for you, to inſtruct you 1. As to your Spiritual, and 2dly. as to your Civil Worldly Concerns. But leſt I ſhould be taken away before I have time to do ſo, I ſhall write briefly here, what may afterwards be more enlarged.

I. As to your Spiritual Concerns. As I ſaid, you have great Encouragement to ſeek to God for Mercy: But be ſure don't truſt to your outward Priviledges. Realize, that by Nature you are in a moſt ſinful, miſerable Condition; and except you be converted, you will ſurely periſh. Realize alſo, that you cannot work Grace in your Hearts, nor be juſtified on the account of your own Righteouſneſs in whole or in part before God. Realize that there is all Fulneſs in Jeſus Chriſt; That he is able to draw you to himſelf; and that his Righteouſneſs is ſufficient for your Juſtification. I beſeech and charge you therefore, to ſet upon the Duty of ſecret Prayer; and beg of God to work true Grace in your Souls, and to call you effectually; to work Faith in you, and enable you to cloſe aright with Jeſus Chriſt, as your Prophet Prieſt and King. Give up

up your ſelves to God in Chriſt. Take heed of doing the Work in your own Strength: Lie at the Feet of Jeſus Chriſt; acknowledge that you are in his Hands, and that he will do you no wrong if he condemn you for ever: yet plead with him, that he has call'd you to come to him; that he has taken you viſibly into Covenant with himſelf; and that you are undone for ever, unleſs he have Mercy on you: and reſolve to lie at his Feet, and that if you periſh, you'l periſh there. Take heed of Deſpair, and take heed alſo of Preſumption. Be much in Prayer, and be diligent in reading the Word of God, and other good Books. Make Conſcience of keeping holy the Lord's Day; and if you live to Years of Maturity, take the firſt Opportunity to ſeek admiſſion to the Lord's Table. Be very mindful in the mean time of your Baptiſm, by which you are obliged to forſake the Fleſh, the World and the Devil, and to give up your ſelves to God, to be his Servants for ever——. I charge you alſo be Dutiful to your Mother, and to all your Superiors, where'er God may diſpoſe of you.

Be careful alſo to flee youthful Luſts, ſuch as Lying, Stealing, Vanity and Frothineſs; Uncleanneſs of Heart, Eye or Hand, or Tongue, or any kind or degree of that Sin. Take heed of all Intemperance and Exceſs in Drinking——: Take heed of keeping bad Company. My Children, if Sinners entice you, conſent not: He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall be wiſe; but a Companion of Fools ſhall be deſtroyed. Take heed of Pride and Paſſionateneſs, of Impatience and Diſcontent: Take heed of Idleneſs——; and take heed

heed of quenching the Spirit, and of ſtifling Convictions, and putting off to *hereafter* the Duties God requires of you——: Take heed of making raſh Vows; they often prove the Snares of the Devil: (I know by ſad Experience.) Take heed of falling from good Beginnings. Ben't ſcar'd from Religion, by the Difficulties in the way thereof: Remember it's better to ſuffer Affliction with the People of God——: 'Tis never too ſoon to fear God and keep his Commands: But remember you can keep no Command until you believe: Without Faith it's impoſſible to pleaſe God. To have done; I charge you all to ſeek and ſerve the Lord God of your Fathers with a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind: If ye ſeek him, he will be found of you; but if you forſake him, he will caſt you off for ever.

II. As to your worldly Concerns; Beg of God to make all your Choices for you; to chuſe your Callings; Place of Abode; Companions——. Begin all weighty Affairs with Prayer. Be adviſed: In the multitude of Counſellers there is ſafety. Do nothing raſhly. Don't ſeek great things for your ſelves. Let that which is neceſſary be done firſt. Love and be kind to your Miniſter. Be diligent in your Callings. Be frugal, and not ſneaking, in your Expenſes. Take heed of running into Debt, on any account. I have found it a great ſnare. Proportion your Expences ever to your Income. Don't affect to wear or ſpend above your Rank. Remember it's God inſtructs to Diſcretion, gives power to get Wealth: His Bleſſing makes Rich. If ever God make you Heads of

of Families, maintain Religion in your Families. Be ready to forgive Injuries; ſlow to reſent them. Be kind to the Poor: Remember the *Dutch* Proverb;

Theſts never enrich; *Alms never impoveriſh*; and *Prayer hinders no Work.*

Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added. Learn betimes to hate Sin, and love God, and prize Chriſt, and bear the Croſs——. And O let me ſee none of you at Chriſt's *left* Hand in the Day of Chriſt. Often think how fearful your Condemnation will be, if you are found out of Chriſt in the Day of Judgement. O better, ten thouſand times had it been, that you had not been born: But, O how happy if you are found in Chriſt! I tell you, you had better live in Hell with Chriſt to Eternity, than in Heaven without him.

My Dear Children, I commend you all to the Infinite Mercy of an alſufficient God, the God of your Fathers in many Generations; with Him I leave you being perſuaded he will care for you; Yea, knowing He will do ſo, if you keep his Covenant, and remember his Commands to do them: praying He will be your God for Ever, and your Guide even to Death; and give us a joyful Meeting in the Heavenly World, there to live and reign together with our Bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, thro' the Endleſs Ages of Eternity. *Amen*! *Amen*! *Amen*!

P. S. What is written before is the firſt, and a rude Draught, juſt what came to my Mind, and

is not digeſted and duely methodized; If God give Opportunity, I may draw it over again and correct it. But as it is You may ſee ſomething of my Concerniedneſs for you. What you have ſeen amiſs in me, mend in your ſelves, and follow me only ſo far as I have followed Chriſt, neither in Principles nor Practice. ———

Sect. II. *Mr.* Symmes's *Farewel-Advice to his Servants.*

To my Servants, or all that have lived in my Family, that yet live; I bid you Farewel. I charge you remember the Advice and Counſel I have given you from time to time; to flee Youthful Luſts; to attend Secret Prayer; and give your ſelves to God. I'm ſorry for every Thing unexemplary, you have ſeen or heard in my Family from me or mine; Don't imitate any thing that is evil.

I pray the Lord of Heaven to bleſs you. While you have lived with me I have prayed for you, almoſt every Day by name. I ſhall now pray for you no more: Beſure pray for your ſelves, live Holily while on Earth, then if God ſee meet, you ſhall live happily: But whatever befal you in that Vale of Tears, you ſhall dwell eternally in God's Preſence in the higheſt Heavens, where is fulneſs of Joy, and Glory in its Conſummation.

Sect. III.

Sect. III. *Mr.* Symmes's *Farewel to his People.*

To my Dear Charge, the Inhabitants and all the Hearers, eſpecially the Church, in *Bradford.*

Dearly Beloved, Farewel in the Lord.

I thank you very heartily for all your Kindneſs to me and mine. I thank you for the Love and Reſpect you have ſhown me, in your diligent, devout and conſtant Attendance on my Miniſtry. And for the many other Tokens of Love many of you have given me: God is not Unfaithful to forget your Work and Labour of Love.

I have been greatly wrong'd and it will appear ſo another Day about my leaving *Boxford* and ſettling with you: I have laid thoſe things more to heart, than the World is ſenſible of. I freely forgive ſuch as have injured me. I pray God forgive Them: and pray and adjure my Friends to do the like. The Lord give them Repentance. I'm grieved I've been ſo unſerviceable, ſo ſlothful, ſo unexemplary amongſt you: That you have been ſo much diſquieted and unhappy on my account: God knows how I have mourned for this.

What you have ſeen amiſs in me, pray bury with me. I have not ſhun'd to declare, according to my meaſure, the whole Counſel of God to you; and truſt I am pure, thro' the Blood of ſprinkling, from the Blood of all Men. I beſeech

you and charge you, as you intend to anſwer it at the dreadful Tribunal of Chriſt, that you remember and live the Truths I have delivered to you: Endeavour to reform what I've told you is amiſs. Take heed you don't deceive your ſelves by being Hearers only. Forgive one another. Love one another. If it be poſſible live peaceably. Above all, believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and then you will do every thing elſe.

I pray God bleſs you and your Poſterity. Be kind to my poor Children, I pray you.

Be careful to begin all matters of Moment by Prayer. Be ſure in meditating the Settling another Miniſter, do ſo. And be well adviſed. Don't be ſelf-conceited, any of you, and wilful:—— But ſit down with what is done by the Majority, if the Perſon choſen be neither Heterodox nor Scandalous. When you have choſen a Miniſter (and I pray you may have one every way ſuperior to my ſelf, in Miniſterial Abilities, I mean;) give him an Honourable Maintenance. I may now ſpeak freely; it's impoſſible a Miniſter ſhould do the Work of a Miniſter, if he han't a Goſpel-Miniſter's Maintenance; I mean, ordinarily. I know not what to ſay particularly, but this I ſay, Don't think you have done your Duty, if you have done what the Town propoſes at firſt; unleſs you will make this Propoſal as a Town, That this you will do for him at preſent, and deſire him, if he want more afterward, he ſhould freely ſay it to the Town; And if it be in the Town's Power, he ſhall have it. Let particular Perſons go to him, and ſay, and that often, *Is any thing wanted?*

And

And lay it up for a Principle, and teach it your Children, that there is nothing loſt that is beſtowed on a Goſpel-Miniſter, as ſuch. Viſit your Miniſter often: Make your Preſents of Reſpect or Teſtimonial Charity: I know the Heart of a Miniſter, and I'm ſure you'l ſerve him more than a little, by little matters, ſeaſonably and kindly done. It's not the Gift, but the Mind of the Giver, that is obſerved principally. But then, above all, attend diligently to his Miniſtry: Diligent Laborious Hearers, for ever, make a diligent and laborious Miniſter, if he've any Goodneſs in him. Endeavour to profit by your Miniſter: Improve him: Lay open your ſpiritual Caſes before him: He's a Talent you are accountable for. The Lord, that walks in the midſt of the Golden Candleſticks, walk ſtill in this; brighten it, increaſe it, preſerve it, ſupply it; fill it from time to time, with a burning and ſhining Light, and hold the Stars that may be ſent hither, in his own right Hand. And the Lord grant that you may be my Joy, and Crown of Rejoicing in the Day of the Lord Jeſus.

Finally, Brethren, Farewel: Be perfect; Be of one Mind; Live in Peace: And the God of Love and Peace be with you all, Amen.

Sect. IV.

Sect. IV. *Mr.* Symmes's *Advice and Inſtruction about chuſing a Miniſter to ſucceed him after his Death; delivered* Sept. 16. 1716. *Intituled,* "A Legacy of Advice to the Church of *Bradford*:" —— From

II. Pet. I. 15. *Moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my Deceaſe, to have theſe things always in Remembrance.*

A Noble Reſolution! worthy of the great Apoſtle of the Circumciſion. He reſolves not only to Do all the Good he can, while he lives: But to lay a Foundation for the Good of the Diſperſed Jews after his Deceaſe. The Serious Thoughts of the Approaches of Death, are of good Uſe to quicken us to Duty. Indeed the Apoſtle expreſs'd this his pious Reſolution, when he knew his Death was near; *v.* 14. *Knowing that I muſt ſhortly put off this my Tabernacle*: He was indeed an old Man; and the time of his Martyrdom drew near, when he wrote this Epiſtle; yet the Reſolution becomes the youngeſt Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Doct. That *the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, will be much concerned for the good of their People after their Deceaſe: That they may be an Holy and Happy People: That Religion may flouriſh among them*: Or, *That they may do Well, and that it may be Well with them.*— [Examples, *Chriſt, Paul, Peter.*]

Now

Now if you enquire, Whence it is that Miniſters of the Goſpel are concerned for the Good of their People after their Deceaſe——?

A. In General, It is from their Love to them, and their Zeal for the Glory of God.——— More particularly there are Two Reaſons;— 1. Becauſe they know that a People's Spiritual Intereſt is their Main Intereſt.— *Deut.* 32. 47.— And Religion flouriſhes in a Place, where God gives a People a Paſtor after his own Heart.—— 2. Becauſe People are oftentimes (thro' the Imprudence and Folly of Men, the Subtilty of Satan, and the Righteous Judgement of God) very unhappy for a long time, after the Deceaſe of their faithful Miniſters. How often has there been great Contentions in our Towns and Churches about the Settlement of a Miniſter! Scarce any thing makes ſo much Noiſe in our Towns, and occaſions (for the time) ſo much ſinful Anger and evil Speaking.——— Hence the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel may well be concerned, before they leave the World, as far as in them lies, to prevent ſuch Inconveniences when they are gone.

Again, If you enquire, How may the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel expreſs their Concern for the Welfare of their Hearers after their Deceaſe? *Anſ.* 1. By laying up a ſtock of Prayers for them —— [*Act.* 20 32, 36. *Col.* 1. 3, 9. *Eph.* 1. 3. *Rom.* 1. 9.]—— 2. By faithfully and prudently diſpenſing the Word of God unto them.— This tends— to Antidote them againſt Error and Temptation; againſt Seducers and falſe Teachers, that they may be expoſed to, after their Deceaſe.—

ceaſe.— 3. By giving them the beſt Advice they can, as to their Succeſſors in the work of the Miniſtry. How to Obtain them: How to Carry to them when obtained: And leaving their Charge with them to attend it, ſo far as is conſonant to the Word of God.——— And many of the Miniſters in the Country that are dead, did at leaſt on their Death-Bed, not only pray for their Churches, but alſo adviſe them what Courſe to take, in order to their getting a Miniſter when they are dead: Yet inaſmuch as Miniſter's Lives are uncertain, it ſeems to me very agreeable, that while they are in Health, and enjoy the free uſe of their Reaſon, it is every way beſt for them to draw up what Advice of this kind they think proper to leave with their Hearers; and improve their utmoſt Intereſt and Influence with them, for their future Benefit. To be ſure this can't be amiſs: Miniſters will die never the ſooner for it; it will be ſome eaſe to their Minds when they come to lie on a Sick Bed.—— They can ordinarily have no ſiniſter Views in ſuch Advice— *&c.* Hence it is my Opinion, That Miniſters ſhould, eſpecially on ſome Occaſions, give their Advice to their Hearers, as to this Affair, to prevent their taking wrong Steps, and following ſuch Precedents as may lead them into grievous Perplexities, and be a laſting and irreparable Injury to others. I ſhall therefore uſe the freedom with you, my Brethren, tho' I han't the advantage of Age to enforce my Advice, yet ſhew mine Opinion, what Method you ſhould take, to obtain a Miniſter when I ſhall be taken from you, or become incapable to ſerve you, in the bleſſed Work of the Miniſtry. Indeed

Indeed the Circumſtances of a Place and People do alter ſo much in a few Years, that ſome Articles of Advice, that may be proper now, may be very unſuitable afterward. Wherefore I propoſe at preſent, to give only ſuch general Advice, as will either be ſuitable in all Caſes, or that will probably be ſuitable for you, my Brethren, upon my leaving of you.

In the firſt place then, I adviſe you, my Friends, when you are deſtitute of a Miniſter, (until you can be ſupplied with one to preach to you, that you are adviſed will be proper to ſettle with you) to go to Meeting to *Haverhil*, and other the neighbouring Churches, as is moſt convenient for you; unleſs you can get ſome Body to ſupply the neighbouring Miniſters, whom I would have you get, if you can, to preach with you in their turns, on this Occaſion. I then adviſe you, to take the firſt Opportunity to keep a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, to bewail your Sins with reſpect to your former Miniſter, and to beg of God to chuſe a Miniſter for you; to give to you a Paſtor after his own Heart. This has been the laudable Practice of theſe Churches, and I doubt not your compliance with it, and therefore ſhall not inſiſt farther on it; only be caution'd that you be not ſo prepoſterous as to chuſe a Miniſter, or reſolve who you will have, if poſſible, before you have ſpread the Caſe before the Lord. Be adviſed alſo to invite a ſuitable Number of the neighbouring Elders to aſſiſt you in carrying on the Work of that Day.

In the cloſe of the Day, let the Deacons of the Church wait on the Reverend Elders, in the

Name of the Church, and Town too, if it may be, and having given them moſt hearty Thanks for their Labour of Love among you, deſire them to adviſe you whom to apply your ſelves to, and what Steps you ſhall take in your future Proceeding in this great Affair; deſiring them, if they are Strangers to the Candidates for the Miniſtry, to enquire for you at *Cambridge*, or where they think proper; and to give you notice, who they can adviſe to. Remember, that *in the multitude of Counſellers there is ſafety*; or as ſome chuſe to read it, In adviſing with ſuch as are moſt able to give Advice, there is ſafety. Ordinarily the neighbouring Miniſters are moſt proper Judges, who is moſt ſuitable for their Neighbourhood. Miniſters are the Eyes of the Churches, and their Spiritual Guides; and if they are able, and it be their Buſineſs to guide Souls to Chriſt and Heaven, certainly they are able to judge who are qualified for the Work.—— Don't be ſatisfied in this Affair, with the Advice of One that adviſes to a Relation; ſuch Advice may miſlead you.

Having then asked Advice of the neighbouring Elders, after they have with you, ſolemnly by Prayer with Faſting, ſought to God to direct them what Advice to give you; don't needleſsly and unreaſonably act without it; much leſs divers from it, or contrary to it. Don't be wiſe in your own Conceit; don't lean to your own Underſtanding; be not high minded, but fear——. Remember that where no Counſel is, the People fall; and that it is a mocking of the Meſſengers of the Lord, a mocking God himſelf, to ask Counſel of his Miniſters in ſuch an Affair, under

ſuch

ſuch Circumſtances, and then to act contrary to it, unleſs there can be a good Reaſon aſſigned why you do ſo.

Again, unleſs you ſhould be adviſed to the contrary, or don't chuſe the firſt that you ſhall be adviſed to go to; come off fairly and honourably with Him, before you proceed to hear another. Don't pretend to hear ſeveral firſt, and then to come to a choice: Becauſe it has been found by ſad Experience, that this Method tends to divide People: For it has been found oftentimes, that there are as many Parties in Towns, as there are Perſons that preach: And if People ſhould hear more than One, if they like that One, and be adviſed to him, why not Eight or Ten, if ſo many can be had? But if a People are unanimouſly adviſed to the firſt, and they generally like him, and there is no ſolid Reaſon why they ſhou'd not chuſe him when he is tried and proved, and the Neighbouring Elders and Churches ſignify their Approbation of him, and Deſire of his Settling in their Neighbourhood, what ſhou'd hinder their chuſing him? Why ſhou'd they run the venture of Dividing among themſelves, or grieving their Neighbours by hearing Others?

Again, When you have taken Advice, and are now to hear in order to a Choice, don't be Governed by Affection, but by Judgment. Don't ſay, I don't fancy him, I don't fancy his Preaching or Praying, or Converſation, when you can give no ſolid Reaſon why you don't. Don't ſuffer yourſelves to be prejudiced unreaſonably againſt any Miniſter. Conſider, Does he ſpeak as the Oracles of God? Is he furniſhed with Miniſterial

Accompliſhments? Eſpecially has he the Spirit of a Goſpel-Miniſter ſo far as you can judge? Is he a real Chriſtian, a ſincere Convert? He is moſt like to do much Service.

Be ſure aim at the Glory of God in the choice of a Miniſter. Don't chuſe one becauſe you think he'll not be ſevere againſt Sin, and will let you go on quietly in Sin: Don't prefer One, becauſe he'll come cheaper than another. Don't be ſo fooliſh and impious as to think the cheapeſt Miniſter the moſt Excellent. Don't chuſe One to croſs one another, or any body elſe; but aim, I ſay, chiefly at the Glory of God in this great Affair. Whether you eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God. Remember, if you act from a Spirit of Covetouſneſs, or Revenge in ſuch an Affair, it is an aggravated Sin; and tho' you may cover it from Men, you can't hide it from God; but he will call you into Judgement therefor: For every idle Word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account in the Day of Judgment: How much more of their Behaviour in an Affair of this Nature, of the Principle you act from, and the End you aim at! Conſider then, who is like to do moſt Service for God, and bring moſt Glory to his Name, and do moſt to promote his Kingdom, and the Salvation of your Souls; and endeavour to chuſe ſuch an One.

Again, Covet earneſtly the beſt Gifts. This we are expreſsly commanded to do. Get the moſt learned Perſon you can, if otherwiſe well accompliſhed. Gifts muſt not be deſpiſed. They'l enable to divide the Word of Truth——. And yet

yet ſhew I unto you what is more excellent. Labour to chuſe one Orthodox in the Doctrine of the Decrees; in the Doctrine of Regeneration, in the Doctrine of Free-will, in the Doctrine of Juſtification, in the Doctrine of Perſeverance;— One that is ſound in God's Statutes; one of a good Converſation.

Labour to chuſe one that may be agreeable to all the neighbouring Miniſters and Churches, if poſſible; eſpecially to the Elder and Church at *Haverhil*; according to the excellent Advice in our Platform of Diſcipline: Read and peruſe well that Chapter that treats concerning the choice of an Elder, and act accordingly. Verily the Communion of Churches is much upheld by the Unity and good Agreement of the Elders in the Vicinity; and their Diſagreement tends to hinder it. The Intereſt of Religion depends very much, humanely ſpeaking, on the good Agreement of the neighbouring Elders. If they love one another, and agree well together, they will ſtrengthen one another in their Work: If they diſagree, they will weaken each other's Hands, and diſcourage each other's Hearts more than a little. Churches therefore ought, what in them lies, to ſuit their neighbouring Miniſters and Churches, in the choice of a Miniſter. To be ſure they ſhould not chuſe deſignedly to grieve and croſs them. I not only adviſe but charge you ſolemnly, that you act not with ſuch a naughty unchriſtian Spirit in the choice of Miniſters. Remember you are not only to chuſe a Miniſter for your ſelves, but a Neighbour for the neighbouring Elders and Churches; and one

who

who after a while, it's probable, your neighbouring Churches will have occaſion to ſeek to for Advice and Aſſiſtance in the like caſe; And therefore for Churches to have no regard to their neighbouring Elders and Churches in their choice, is very *Diſorderly* and Unneighbourly, and of a very fatal Tendency. They are very blind that can't ſee it. Remember, the Rule in this caſe is, Do as you would be done by. Deal by the neighbouring Elders and Churches, as you would have them deal by you in the like caſe. Therefore do nothing raſhly. Don't puſh on an Affair of this Nature too haſtily, leſt you repent at leiſure. Don't Cabal about chuſing a Miniſter, but labour to ſee God going before you. The leſs of Man appears, the more of God will appear in ſuch an Affair. Let every one labour to inform his Judgement impartially concerning the Qualifications of the Perſon propoſed to choice. Don't decline any thing reaſonable and proper for this end.

Be perſuadeable by Wiſe and Good Men, in ſuch an Affair. Though you ſhou'd not be flatter'd or wheedled, nor driven in ſuch an Affair, yet ſhew your ſelves Men, by being willing to hearken to Reaſon; and ſhew your ſelves Chriſtians, endowed with that Wiſdom which is eaſy to be entreated; and not like the Horſe and Mule which have no Underſtanding.

Let the Church ſtand faſt in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free, and go before the Town according to the wholeſome Law of the Province, and the laudable Practice of theſe Churches from the beginning; and manage the whole

whole Affair orderly. Labour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace: ſtudying to be Quiet; every one acting in his own Sphere: being ready to condeſcend as far as Reaſon and Religion will allow, for the ſake of Peace.

And when you have made your choice, don't break upon Terms, if it may be avoided. O Sirs, love God and your Souls better than this comes to. Remember the Goſpel will bear its own Charges: and that which is done to the Miniſters of the Goſpel out of your Eſtates, is God's and not yours; and your withholding it tends to Poverty.

And if when you have choſen, any ſhou'd be *uneaſie*: let thoſe that have their choice carry prudently to them; let them ſee and underſtand, you are grieved at your heart, that they are not gratified as well and as much as you: And aſſure them, if they can ſee any thing in the whole affair, wherein you have miſs'd it, tho' you can't at preſent, yet you ſhould be glad to ſee it: and tell them, if it be really as they think, that you have miſs'd it, you are ſorry for it, and ask their Pardon. Remember that yielding ſometimes (though not always) pacifieth great Offences. Thus carry friendly to them, and do what you can, that the Miniſter you have choſen may do ſo too: And don't inſult them, whether they are right or wrong; ordinarily that will do no good. Be very tender towards them, and gain them if poſſible. If they are unreaſonably Obſtinate, treat them fairly, and leave them to Providence. And as for ſuch as think they are, or are really wronged by the Choice of the Miniſter,

ſter, if you are treated as I have directed, forgive the Offence, and don't make ill worſe, by maintaining Contention. If the Majority don't carry to you as I have directed, ask Advice of the neighbouring Miniſters what to do; and comply with it, unleſs you can give a good Reaſon why you don't.

Through the whole Affair, watch and pray that ye enter not into Temptation. You can't expect a Bleſſing, if you don't act religiouſly in ſuch an Affair. And having obtained a good Miniſter, carry well to him. Viſit him frequently: Be thankful for him: Do well by him: Pray much for him: Stand for him and by him as much as you can: Attend diligently and conſtantly, and endeavour to profit by his Miniſtry. Don't unneceſſarily oppoſe and grieve him, —— ſtudy to be Bleſſings to him in all regards.

This is the ſum of the Advice I have to give you, in this affair; In which I have humbly ſought to God to direct me in giving you this Advice, and weighed the ſeveral Articles as I could. I have no Siniſter Views, nor Self Ends to promote: And though you may adviſe with thoſe, whilſt I live, or after I am Dead, that are more able to Adviſe you; yet you can adviſe with None that loves you more, or wiſhes you better, or is more concerned for your Well-Doing and Well-Being. If I ſee cauſe to alter my thoughts in what I have offered, I ſhall give you an account of it, with my Reaſons. If any of you diſlike or diſapprove any Article in my Advice, I'd be glad you'd inform me of it, with the reaſons thereof. I purpoſe to Tranſcribe what I have now offered, if it find Acceptance

ceptance with you, and note the Scriptures that it is founded on, which I han't time now to turn to: And leave it for you to make what Uſe of, you ſee meet when I am gone. And in the mean time, I wiſh, if I ſhould live to have an Aſſiſtant in the work of the Miniſtry, and you ſhou'd ſee cauſe to get one for me, that you may get one that may in all reſpects excel me, —— and the like I wiſh my Succeſſor may be; And ſhall not ceaſe to pray for the Church and Town of *Bradford*, and Congregation belonging to it, that this Golden Candleſtick may be illuminated with Burning and Shining Lights, even to the ſecond Coming of the Son of Man.

And now the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you: My love be with you all in Chriſt Jeſus, Amen. 1 *Cor.* 16. 23, 24.

CONCLUSION.

I expected to have inſerted ſome more Papers of Mr. *Symmes*'s, one at leaſt, *ſcil.* A Letter about *Conſociation*, which a few Years ago he drew up to ſend, with his Church, to the neighbouring Churches for that End; but it cannot at preſent be found. I ſhall now only add (as the Sum and Confirmation of my plain Account) his Character as it was given in the *Boſton News-Letter*, No. 1133.

Bradford, Octob. 9. 1725. On Wedneſday laſt, between 12 & 1 in the Morning, Died here the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Symmes*, the Faithful Paſtor of the Church in this Place: who having Preach-

ed, first for some Years at *Boxford*, then succeeded his Father in the Ministry here: continued therein for above 17 Years; and died in the 48*th* Year of his Age.

His Death was sudden and unexpected; for tho' his Distemper was Chronical, He had so much Spirit to sustain his Infirmities, that he complained not much, till a little before his Death. About three Weeks before, being call'd to preach at a Fast, in *Newbury*, on account of the Sickness prevailing there, he found himself very much indispos'd with a great Pain in his Breast——: The next Sabbath at Evening he was taken with bleeding at the Nose; and again Tuesday Morning following he bled for the space of two Hours; but held up till the next Sabbath, and performed the publick Service of that Day but very faint: The next Tuesday Night he fell a bleeding again, which continued, without Intermission, about twenty six Hours; from which time he languished a Week longer and died.

He was descended from a Line of Venerable Ancestors, employed in the same Sacred Office with himself; whose Father, Grand-father, and Great-Grand-father were famous Ministers of the Gospel.

He was a goodly Person; of a vivid and comely Countenance; of a strong and sanguine Constitution: of a very sprightly Genius; a cheerful and quick Temper; which being sanctified made him the more ready to every good Work.

He was Exemplary for his early Piety, and continued a cheerful, devout, lively, zealous and hum-

humble Chriſtian, as long as he liv'd; and ended his Life with a moſt rational, ſedate and comfortable Aſſurance of his Eternal Well-being.

He was a true *Calviniſt*———; a wiſe and faithful Miniſter of the Goſpel; He was uncommonly furniſhed for his ſacred Office; A Man of bright Parts; a hard Student; a polite Scholar; and as diligently improved his Talents. His *Prayers* were always Pathetical, Submiſs & Fervent, and excellently adapted to all Occaſions. He gave himſelf very much unto Prayer, not only at the ſtated Seaſons———; but on Days of Faſting, which he frequently obſerved in Secret, and very much promoted in Publick, on ſpecial Occaſions, and found great ſucceſs in. He was a correct & pertinent, pungent and undaunted *Preacher*; never feared the Faces of Men; nor ſhun'd to Declare the whole Counſel of God. He had a Clear Pleaſant Voice; and *Excelled* in his moſt Lively & Artful Pronunciation. He had a good Spirit of Government, Zeal and Courage to *Rule* in the Houſe of God.

He took great *Delight* in his Study; and greater in the Duties of Publick Worſhip, eſpecially Singing God's Praiſes.—— Was ſcarce ever Weary of Praying & Preaching; He had a very great Care & Concern for the Riſing Generation, took great Pains to Inſtruct them by Catechiſing in Private & Publick, and frequently Preaching at the Young Mens Meetings: And he alſo diligently inſpected the whole Flock, by Paſtoral Viſits, and ſometimes ſending for many of them to his own Houſe, and was *Eminently* Skilful and Serviceable in Private Application to Souls.

He was a Perſon of a Catholick Spirit, Generous Principles, a Liberal Soul; and much given to Hoſpitality, a Faithful Friend—. Was always Cheerful & Profiting in his Converſation, & very much Recommended Religion thereby. He had a hearty Concern for the Publick Weal, eſpecially the good Order & Eſtabliſhment of the Churches and the Power of Godlineſs in *New-England*.

In a word, He was a Publick Extenſive Bleſſing, highly Eſteemed in his Life; much Lamented at his Death; and Honourably Interr'd by his Kind People. *October* 8.

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